diogenes

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DIOGENES

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CONTENTS

JACQUES RUEFF	Order in Nature and Society	1
GILBERTO FREYRE	Water and Cane Sugar	17
RAYMOND ARON	Workers, Proletarians, and Intellectuals	31
CHARLES G. BELL	Modern Poetry and the Pursuit of Sense	47
DJÉMIL SALIBA	Philosophical Symbolism and the Use of the Myth among Arab Philosophers	66
REVIEW ARTIC	LES	
V. GACHKEL a	nd S. VIDERMAN	
	Psychosomatic Hypotheses and Research	80
CARL J. FRIEDI	RICH	
Two Philosophical Interpretations of Natural Law		98
BOOK REVIEWS	3	
Rome and Asia: an account of recent works by Franz Altheim (ANDRÉ PIGANIOL)		113
Notes on the Contril	outors	123

123

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ORDER IN NATURE

AND SOCIETY

In a cloud, the imagination can cut out patterns freely. The substance which fills them is real, but the objects which they outline do not exist. To exist, they would have to be distinguishable from the continuity within which they arose; they would have to constitute within it a particular and identifiable state endowed with an egregious privilege: duration. This duration can be brief or long, that of a cake of soap or of a spiral nebula; it is always of finite dimensions. This is what makes it the opposite of the instantaneousness of the mathematical beings which differential calculus arbitrarily cuts out within the continuity of movements.

Existence is a singularity that endures. But this duration, in the domain of the realities that are offered to our cognition, is never unlimited. In the universe of men there is nothing that escapes the slow or rapid, but always active, degradation which debases everything that has risen, which attenuates every kind of diversity in order to bring about a uniform distribution that physicists call the maximum state of entropy and 'housekeepers, as well as sociologists, call the maximum of disorder.

This deterioration of order, this inescapable trend toward a state of disorganization in which no one arrangement is preferred to some other, because they are all equally devoid of merit, constitutes, according to mod-

ern physics, the most general of natural phenomena. From the very first moment of a structure's existence, the forces of erosion go to work to destroy the tie which unites its parts and to distribute according to chance

the elements of which these parts are composed.

Social orders are as vulnerable as material orders. If there is any doubt about this, the fourteen civilizations which Toynbee enumerates in the graveyards of history prove that societies are likewise mortal.^x And everywhere the slow and continuous ascent of the soil of cities, as shown, for example, in Rome by the burying of ancient monuments, provides a concrete picture of the inevitable fall of civilizations into a state of chaos. The trend toward an increase in entropy is "just the natural tendency of things to approach the chaotic state . . . unless we obviate it," a great physicist, Erwin Schroedinger, has said recently.²

In the kaleidoscopic intermingling of substances, an order, no matter how improbable, can, during an instant of reason, be the effect of a chance encounter. The order will accord with existence only if an appropriate mechanism prevents it from disintegrating by removing the parts which constitute it from the simple operation of the laws of chance. Existence never depends on itself alone. It subsists only if an appropriate mechanism establishes it, which eliminates chance and stops up the fissures through which the latter constantly seeks to recapture its prey.³ This removal of chance is always the work of an organization, that is to say, of an ordered arrangement which groups its constituent elements into a true society.

Atoms are societies of electrons. Molecules are societies of atoms. The solar system is a society of planets. Galaxies are societies of stars. The uni-

verse is a society of galaxies.

The common trait of all these societies is their discontinuous structure. Louis de Broglie tells us: "Only the existence of quantic discontinuities makes it possible to understand the stability of atomic and molecular edifices. It alone protects them against a rapid descent into the ocean of chaos." But life itself, with its treasures of organization that become more and more subtle with every ascent in the hierarchy of species, seems to de Broglie to be, in accordance with Henri Bergson's profound insight, a means of postponing the inevitable increase of entropy. "Life," he adds,

^{1.} L'Histoire (Gallimard, Paris, p. 52; Eng. ed.: London, Oxford, 1934).

^{2.} What is Life? (Cambridge, University Press, 1951), p. 74.

^{3.} Pierre Auger, L'Homme microscopique (Paris, Flammarion), p. 27.

^{4.} La Cybernétique, Structure et Evolution des Techniques (Paris, S.E.T.), p. 56.

"is a struggle to maintain the very improbable state which the living organism represents," but it is a struggle waged with the certainty of defeat "because in the end the increase of entropy will prevail with the return to the most probable state in which the organism will be dissolved and reduced to dust."

Nevertheless, life—and this, I think, is its essential characteristic—has invented, through the mechanism of reproduction, the means of prolonging through time this desperate struggle against the increase of entropy. It accepts the fact that its societies disintegrate but it has found the means of re-creating them in always identical form.

What is essential in the point of view with which we are here concerned is that atoms, cells and genes—and also the societies of cells which are complex living beings—remain stable only because their structures cannot undergo the continuous variations posited by classical physics. They consist of individual entities united in permanent organizations which are true societies.

The existence of these societies always rests on the existence, among the elements—I was going to say individuals—that constitute their attractions, forces or, speaking generally, interactions which integrate the behavior of each and assure the stability of the social edifice. Indeed, the principal if not the sole purpose of the natural sciences—physics, chemistry, astronomy, biology—is to study the mechanisms of integration and regulation which beget the various natural societies.

Social orders, although in general less solid than natural orders, are not distinguished from these either in stability or even in the techniques which establish them. They consist of groupings of individuals which are based upon the *interactions* that exist between their members. These interactions, whose nature we will clarify later on, insure the stability of the social structures which they establish.

The groupings, in complex human societies, are diverse. However, they are all characterized by the kind of hierarchy that is observed in the realm of the natural sciences.

It is not possible to describe here the various types of social groupings uncovered by the study, in space and time, of human collectivities. The couple, the gens or deme, and in a general way, the family, the curia, the phratry, the tribe, the city, afford examples of the social hierarchy. Feudalism in the Occident and castes in the Orient, constitute modes of

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association based upon principles which are different but which are equally hierarchical. Each of these societies stems from the sum of the societies that preceded it. "Human society," says Fustel de Coulanges, "did not develop like a circle that grows little by little, expanding step by step. On the contrary, it consists of small groups, established long before it, which have joined one another. Several families formed the phratry, several phratries the tribe, several tribes the city. Family, phratry, tribe, city are societies which exactly resemble one another, and which are created one from the other by a series of federations. . . . The city is not an assemblage of individuals: it is a confederation of many groups."

But cities are, in turn, integrated into confederations. The amphictyonies, those of both Delos and Delphi, are veritable societies of cities, welded together by a common cult—"because," Strabo says, "the same idea that prevailed in the founding of cities also led to the institution of

sacrifices common to several cities."

It was this same idea that begot the Roman empire. "Let us form only one state, a *civitas*," Annius cried out in the Senate, in 340 B.C. Annius was the head of the cities of Latium which had united in an effort to overcome the chaos into which conquest without integration had plunged them.⁷

The need for an intermediary body in the process of association is confirmed by the fact that in conquered Gaul and Spain, which never experienced a true municipal regime, Rome tried to create one "either because it did not believe it was possible to rule any other way, or because to assimilate them little by little to the Italian populations, it was necessary to make them follow the same route that those populations had travelled."8

Modern states are also the product of a federating process. The latter, as we watch it, evolves by creating first nations and then international groupings—such as the League of Nations and today the United Nations—or supranational ones like the European Coal and Steel Community.

Running parallel to this political integration, the need to stimulate, maintain and discipline productive activities led to the development of an economic hierarchy which embraced enterprises, corporations, employers' associations and trade unions, trusts and cartels, committees of organization and organs for national or international planning.

All these groupings, however diverse their forms, their extent and their

^{6.} La Cité antique (Paris, Hachette, 1870), pp. 143-145.

^{7.} Titus Livy, iii. 5, 5.

^{8.} Fustel de Coulanges, La Cité antique, pp. 448, 452.

object, have one characteristic in common: they associate individuals—physical or moral persons—into one collective structure which possesses a certain permanence and therefore constitutes a society.

Each society, by virtue of its unity and its permanence, can, in turn, be regarded as an individual capable of forming, with analogous individuals,

a new society of a higher type.

The social order, however diverse it may be, appears thus, in all instances, as the effect of a technique of integration. It secures the elements that it associates from disorder, incorporating them into a structure capable

of enduring.

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The phenomenon of social integration has been very little studied. It was only recently that a legal philosopher, Maurice Hauriou, attempted to formulate a theory. According to him, "That which is instituted is the opposite of that which is unorganized, isolated, strictly individualized, ephemeral, and temporary." "Institution implies the idea of organization, that is to say, of ordered arrangement, and the idea of stability, of permanence."

Seen in this way, the concept of the institution is extremely general. It includes both the concept of juridical institution, a body of legal rules organized around a central idea in a systematically ordered whole, and the concept of purely social institution, not a body of rules but a permanent and organized human grouping that serves a collective interest. We shall concern ourselves here with the social institution, as a reality distinct from the individuals who compose it.

According to Maurice Hauriou, three essential elements can be distinguished in the Institution: the technique of associations, which insures its existence, the manifestation of communion to which it leads, and the lead-

ing idea that it tends to put into effect.

The technique of association varies greatly according to the object of the institution. However, it conforms to certain common necessities that are based upon the nature of the elements to be associated.

The essential trait of institutions usually classified as social is to be found in their substance, which is made up of human beings. The institution derives its existence not from the texts which tend to create it, but by the

^{9.} Maurice Hauriou, Dean of the Faculty of Law in Toulouse, died in 1929. In 1925 he published, in the fourth fascicule of La Nouvelle Journée, his study on "La Théorie de l'Institution et de Fondation." The text was reprinted in fascicule 23 of the same publication (Bloud et Gay, 1933). The present state of theories concerning "Institution" is expounded in a remarkable article by Jean Brethe de la Gressays, in Vol. V of the Repertoire de Droit Civil of Dalloz.

behavior of the individuals who constitute it. It will have reality only if their behavior establishes it.

However, men are free. I am not speaking now of their juridical rights but of the state which their anatomical structure immutably engenders for them—at least so long as their physical or mental integrity has not been affected. Thanks to this structure, and particularly to the ties of dependence which it establishes, man performs the acts which constitute his behavior only if he wishes to do so. "Man is always in the hands of his own counsel." ¹²⁰

In this respect the slave and the soldier do not differ from the free man. To get them to act, whoever commands them must inspire in them the will to do what he expects of them. It should be noted that every action, so far as the agent is concerned, is worth the results it procures and the sacrifices it requires. In general, the action will not be performed unless the agent, judging according to his own scale of values, tastes, and desires, considers "in his own counsel" that the fruits which it is capable of yielding are more agreeable—the economists say more desirable—than the sacrifices and the effort which it requires are disagreeable, or, to use a different word for the same thing, undesirable.

Thus the behavior of each individual is a function of the value judgments to which the consequences of that behavior give rise. These judgments, everything being equal so far as the nature of things is concerned, spring from inclinations that are peculiar to the person who exercises them, hence from his preferences and his tastes—in a word, from his nature.

Human nature is revealed to us by immediate knowledge of our own consciousness and by mediate knowledge of the consciousness of others. This twofold method of obtaining information attests to the presence in all men of certain fundamental traits that are more or less accentuated but never absent, that give rise to true *interactions* between men, which integrate the elements which they affect into very diverse complexes. We know, in the first place, that all members of the human species live in space and time. The sense of time, cemented by memory, integrates the infinite diversity of human experiences into the unity of the person. The sense of space puts the persons so formed into a common framework of reference where, despite the total separateness of their respective *personal* lives, they

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^{10.} Ecclesiasticus xv. 14. Quoted by Aquinas Summa Theologica I, qu. 22, art. 2, 4.

can coordinate their actions and even exchange the expression of their ideas.

It is impossible to enumerate here all the faculties which, when combined, constitute the human person. We can do no more than point out that the most important and effective of these on the social plane is undoubtedly the faculty of love. Sexual love, maternal love, filial love, love for one's ancestors, divine love, the generators of a basic and universal religiosity, are, in varying degree, omnipresent characteristics of human nature. Since the dawn of history, they associated men in family groups. It is difficult to say whether sexual love or maternal love—as strong among the higher animals as among men—are physical drives or moral aspirations. But they are unquestionably immediate products of human nature. Hence the family, the emanation of sexual love, soldered in space by maternal love, and the feeling of family solidarity in time by love for one's ancestors, can only be regarded as a natural institution. But the bonds which it establishes grow weaker as they become more extensive. The increase in the number of individuals who are united by blood relationships was bound to lead to more and more numerous but less and less cohesive groupings.

Actually, the forces which generate family groupings are balanced, and all the more effectively as they are less intense, by those that are aroused by self-love, by the desire for gratification, by the inclination to possess—in other words, by the generators of individual or family egoism. We leave it to the naturalist and the theologian to explain the coexistence of the opposed forces of love and egoism. We only wish to point out that the conflict between them would be bound to lead to savage societies in which every family unit would mark out by the use of force the area of its sovereignty, and in which those individuals who failed to protect their

independence would be appropriated as if they were things.

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The modification of this natural state which, so far as men were concerned, was the most probable one, could flow only from a change in their behavior. But the latter is the result of reactions which the nature of things, such as it is, provokes in the nature of men, such as they are. Hence one could modify their behavior only by modifying the nature of both men and things.

To alter the nature of men, that is to say, the scale of values in the light of which they determine their actions, one would have to subject them to a real reconditioning. This changes their tastes and desires and teaches them

to destroy what they adore and to adore what they destroyed. Actually, it constitutes for them a second birth.

Such a transformation can only be expected from the power of love, which bestows upon the loved one the power to make the one who loves obey or imitate him. Divine love, love of the father, and, to a certain extent, love of the master have made it possible, through instruction and education, to mold men's souls and to inspire in them a will to perform acts that are very different from those that the uncorrected nature of men would give rise to.

It was religious instruction which inspired in men the behavior which was destined to extend the family as an institution and to give rise to the first social institutions. "Primitive religion actually constituted the Greek and Roman family, established marriage and paternal authority. It fixed the degrees of kinship, consecrated the right of ownership and inheritance. It was primitive religion which, after having enlarged and broadened the family, created a larger association, the city, and reigned in it as it did in the family. It was to religion that the city owed its principles, its rules, its customs, its courts. From it sprang all the institutions of the ancients."

I often think, as I observe the migrations which every morning and everywhere in the world take immense numbers of children to their schools, which take men to their churches, temples or mosques, once or several times a week, of the tremendous task of reconditioning which delivers to society men fitted to engender human institutions.

Nonetheless, no matter how efficacious instruction and education might be, they cannot inspire a general and permanent attitude. When they are of religious origin their efficacy depends upon the intensity of the faith upon which they rest. For all these reasons, the enterprise of conditioning begun by shaping the nature of men has been prolonged and widened by shaping the influence which, via the senses, things themselves exert upon men.

If, then, we consider the nature of men as something given, there remains only one way to modify their behavior and that is to modify the unitary desirability or undesirability which, without any change in their inclinations, the acts that they are capable of performing take on for them.

However, the desirability or undesirability of an act depends upon its over-all effect on the individual who performs it. This effect can only be modified by supplementing its proper results with accessory ones, rewards

^{11.} Fustel de Coulanges, La Cité antique, p. 4.

or penalties, whose desirability or undesirability will be added to those of the first results.

If the accessory is indissolubly attached to the principal, it is from the standpoint of the total result that the action is capable of bringing it about, under the actual conditions in which it occurs, that each individual, his characteristics unchanged, will determine his action. Individual behavior will no longer be determined solely by the consequences of the action as they have been determined by the nature of things, but also by its consequences as corrected by the compelling rewards or penalties that will have been attached to them.

If these compelling rewards or penalties are suitably calculated and if one succeeds in inspiring in the individual the feeling that they will be applied without fail, they give to the authority from which they emanate the certainty of being able to determine, at will and under all circumstances, the behavior of individuals.

The compelling action can be divine or human. The rewards or penalties on which it is based can be promised for this world or for the next. They can be applied by a supernatural power enlightened by transcendental channels or by a temporal power whose information has been furnished by the police. In both cases, the action of gods and kings, in bending the will of men, inspires in them the ordered conduct which will give rise to the institution with an eye to which this conduct was established.

The institutional arrangements created by divine or human legislation are innumerable. I have named a few. They can be classified in two categories: those that oblige the individual to want what the governmental authority wishes him to want; those that lead the individual to decide voluntarily and freely to perform the actions that the governmental authority expects of him.

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Constraint and incitation are also the two extreme forms of institutional technique. They have been used simultaneously to modify the qualitative conduct of individuals, to obtain from them respect for "commandments" and later to impose, despite the animal survivals in their basic nature, devotion to the spirit of charity.

But it is in the economic "institutions" required by technological progress that the institutional procedures of constraint and incitation have been fully employed.

The problem in the complex economies of modern states was not only to create general, qualitative dispositions, but also to stimulate productive activities, to shape their nature and extent, with that precision without which the necessary quantitative equilibrium in the social order could not have been established.

Compulsory planning, by getting the individual to want to do what the plan prescribes for him, allows the planning authorities to resolve the equations of economic equilibrium and to sketch, in human terms, the solutions to which economic calculations have led him.

Incitation by means of prices establishes the reward, which is income, and the penalty, which is expense, at the exact level at which they determine, among all those who are capable of participating in the market, as their own nature determines, the reactions whose totality will assure the indispensable over-all equilibrium. At the same time, recourse to such incitation gives to those who help to shape this equilibrium within the limits of their purchasing power the maximum of satisfaction for the minimum of effort.

The institution that the market constitutes offers a typical example of a regulating mechanism. It utilizes obviously immutable individual characteristics to establish, in fluid and unpredictable circumstances, the collective equilibrium which, for a society, is the condition of permanence.

In all institutions created by the nature of men and things, such as they are or as they have been conditioned by the intervention of institutional aims, one finds, besides techniques of association, the second element that Maurice Hauriou believes is characteristic of the existence of an institution: the state of communion that it establishes between its members in its proper domain.

"This is plainest in the great popular movements that accompany the founding of new political and social institutions; in the Middle Ages, the founding of communes was accompanied by great moral crises that aroused the people to cry, 'communion, communion'; the formation of trade unions at the end of the nineteenth century gave rise to the same movement toward unity among the working class; there is no doubt that the formation of states, at a time when the process assumed the characteristics of a contagion—for example, about 1000 B.C.—caused an analogous movement." 12

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This state of communion between the members of the institution gives it its unity and separates it from the rest of the world by real discontinuities, thresholds, which make it, in the physical sense of the word, an absolute object. These discontinuities endow the institution, whether it is per-

^{12.} Aux Sources du droit (Paris, Librairie Bloud et Gay), p. 105.

sonified or not, with an existence of its own, distinct from that of its members, but distinct, too, from that of the analogous societies that surround it.

In this respect the example of the ancient family, as a closed group, is particularly characteristic: "Each family constitutes first of all a closed society whose own cult separates it from others; religion did not say to man, pointing to another man, there is your brother. It said: there is a stranger; he cannot participate in the religious rites of your household; he can approach neither your family's graveyard nor any other place. And he cannot unite himself with you by common prayer; your gods reject his worship and regard him as their enemy; and as your enemy as well." ¹³

It is these discontinuities that insure the stability of the social edifice and permit it to overcome the ever-present forces of disintegration.

The third characteristic—and, according to Maurice Hauriou, the most important—of any institution is the idea which it puts into effect, to which it attempts to give reality.

This idea characterizes "the order" that the institution establishes. Hence any institution appears to be an arrangement of the elements that constitute it—ordered toward the ends that it hopes to promote.

Political or social institutions are essentially finalist. They illustrate and confirm the thinking of Bergson for whom "reality is ordered to the exact degree in which it satisfies our thought." "Order," he says further, "is spirit rediscovering itself in things." 14

The spirit that rediscovers itself in human institutions is that of the great social reformers, the founders of civilization or of religion, of all those who helped to condition man for the role which the institution demands that he play.

The purposeful nature of the institutional creation becomes attenuated, however, or rather becomes less apparent, as one draws closer to institutions which, like the primitive family or the earliest religions, appear to be the immediate consequences of the human condition as nature itself seems to have fixed it. Of course the ordered aspect, arranged with a view to the result to be obtained, in other words the finalist nature of the institution, does not disappear, at least not for the man who contemplates it. But it becomes more and more difficult, if not impossible, to identify "the inventor" of the order that the institution puts into operation.

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^{13.} Fustel de Coulanges, La Cité antique, p. 104.

^{14.} Evolution créatrice (Geneva, Skira, 1945), p. 229.

Thus primitive institutions appear to be so close to a state of nature that they are distinguished from it only by shadings of ordered states that the natural sciences investigate. However, the ordered states characteristic of our world—atom, molecule, sidereal systems, living cells, pluricellular animals—have seemed to us to be social states. We will now examine all the principal characteristics of the "institution," as the juridical analysis of Maurice Hauriou formulated them.

Each of these natural, social states unites the elements which constitute it into an organized whole, endowed with an individuality that is distinct from that of its members. Integration, of which each society is the product, is the consequence of "interactions" between its members. Sometimes these interactions, such as the forces of attraction that atomic, molecular or solar institutions establish, are *data* proper to the nature of assimilated elements; "is the notion of force, then, clearer than that of love?" At other times, on the contrary, they are the consequence of a conditioning that is peculiar to these elements, a conditioning whose state of magnetism can undoubtedly provide an example.

However, if the social edifices of inanimate nature present, from the standpoint of the technique that establishes them, an institutional character, it is above all in living beings that one finds the modes of association

that are characteristic of truly social institutions.

Elementary behavior, within the social edifices that pluricellular animals constitute, generally seems the effect of a previous conditioning which in turn represents true social planning. Everything happens as if the individual who constitutes the cell really felt himself inspired with the will to perform the act that the plan provided for him. Such a conditioning is indispensable for an explanation of unconscious animal activities such as heartbeats or the digestive process.

However, whenever the individual, that is to say, the cell, preserves a certain freedom, it is incited to perform the task that society expects of it by a conditioning of things suited to stimulate its action. Everything happens as if the ovum, to the exclusion of the cells which surround it, was actually a desired object for the spermatozoa. By pouring the salt of pleasure on acts that it wishes to see accomplished and the bitterness of suffering on those it wishes to keep us from performing, nature seems to utilize rewards or penalties like a legislator who is anxious to achieve, by influencing the behavior of individuals, the integration necessary to social construction.

^{15.} Simone de Beauvoir, Tous les Hommes sont mortels (Paris, Gallimard, 1947), p. 283.

This analogy can be pushed to its extreme limits by the study of regulative mechanisms which insure the stability of societies of cells as well as that of human societies. The cybernetic mechanisms, the innumerable phenomena of "feed-back" which condition the behavior of animals, the transfer of messages, and the incitant effects which the hormones seem to produce in living beings, irresistibly evoke the stimulative and regulative

effects produced by the mechanism of prices.

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We are less familiar with animal societies than with cellular or human societies. But the wonders which our study of them reveals seem likewise to rest on institutional procedures. The caste system in vogue among bees and termites can be explained only in terms of a conditioning suited to inspire in each bee and each termite the will to discharge the function which the plan has marked out for it. Thereby it evokes—making due allowance, of course, for the important difference in regard to effectiveness and rigidity—the techniques of religious and social conditioning which today insure the stability of the caste system in India.

Monographs would be necessary in these and in many other domains to describe the mechanism of integration, generator of social phenomena. All I wish to point out here is that it seems to exist everywhere, that everywhere it has the effect of ordering the behavior of associated elements, and hence of removing it from the operation of mere chance. The mechanisms of conditioning are opposed to and work against mere chance, according to Eddington. 16 For the working of blind forces they substitute an ordering influence and make it possible for us to find, in the societies of which nature is made up, an associative technique analogous, mutatis mutandis, to the one which constitutes, in human societies, the primary

element characteristic of an institutional structure.

The second characteristic element of the social institution is, as we have said, the state of communion which it establishes among its members. Here there can be no doubt. All the institutions of nature, atomic as well as molecular, cellular as well as animal, exhibit this characteristic of convergence and unity which makes natural societies, in the physical sense of the word, "absolute objects" endowed with an existence of their own and separated by discontinuities from the analogous objects which surround them.

As for the third characteristic, the finalism expressed by the idea that has been put into operation, it likewise seems to be present in all natural institutions. Indeed it is difficult to avoid the impression that the eyes were

^{16.} Revue scientifique, August-September 1944.

made for seeing, the lungs for breathing, the egg and the sperm for reproducing. All natural or human institutions tend toward an end: that which is put into operation by the idea with which they seemed to be imbued.

Despite all these analogies, there is a profound difference between natural and human institutions. Human institutions are not only finalist, but, as we know with certainty, intentional. The legislator who created them can almost always be identified. The intention that inspires them, hence the idea which they put into effect, is often formulated explicitly and when it is not, it is easy to discern.

Have we the right to infer, from the finalist appearance of natural institutions, that they put into operation another idea, one that is supernatural, but marked by awareness of its ends and mastery of its means?

Thus we arrive at the edge of an abyss where two kinds of attitudes confront each other. Some, who reject the transcendental explanation, see in instituted order the effect of fortuitous conjunctions that create states which are capable of enduring.

For these people "creation is decomposed into a series of stages, each of which has as its basis an initial permanence, a favorable terrain that can 'wait' without changing. Then, after a prescribed period of time, a fluctuation occurs which adds a new detail to one of the permanent elements and constitutes the beginning of a new permanence. If this stage lasts, that is to say, if it grows and reproduces itself in such a way as to resist the evolution toward disorder, it constitutes a basis for new stages which will appear in the course of time. . . ."¹⁷ Thereafter, natural selection will do its work and by allowing to subsist only the best adapted and most efficacious institutions it will create the illusion of continuous progress toward a more complete efficacy.

"Waiting, fluctuation, development and selection—these are the essentials of the processes in the course of which nothing ever appears that might resemble an orientation toward a pre-established end." According to this explanation, the finalism of nature is merely a fallacious appearance produced by the rigorous selection of the only stimuli that are apt to exist.

For others, to be sure, ordination by chance and selection seems hardly admissible. They refuse to admit that the eye can be, even after several billion years, the product of fortuitous atomic encounters selected by the

^{17.} Pierre Auger, L'homme microscopique (Paris, Flammarion), pp. 43, 44.

^{18.} Ibid.

competition for life. Relating the problem of creation to their experience as creators, they fail to see that the automobile which their thought has created—although it is extremely simple compared to the least complicated vital orders—could have been the product, in the course of a period of no matter how long, of spontaneous encounters of atoms subject exclusively to the laws of chance; encounters stabilized by interactions resulting from the nature of the elements involved and subsequently selected by the play of commercial competition.

Those who reject explanations based on chance and selection believe, with Bergson, that order can only be "an idea rediscovering itself in things." And noting the existence of complex natural orders which are plainly not the product of a human idea, they are led to attribute their creation to a supernatural idea that is endowed with an unlimited power to

condition things.

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Such an explanation satisfies our human minds ascribing an unknown mode of action to a process that we believe we know—that of the influence of our thought upon things—because we immediately feel, in our

consciousness, the reality of it.

But this immediate knowledge is not in any way a rational knowledge. We know from direct experience that our thought can affect things by provoking us to bodily movements. The present state of biological knowledge leads us to believe that these movements are dictated by nervous currents. And the energy of which these currents are composed can only come from atomic changes.

The efficacy of our action on things therefore obliges us to admit that our thought can modify the structure of certain atoms. And so, in the last

analysis, it is man's thought that acts upon the atoms.

How, by what intermediaries, according to what processes?

Until recently the very meaning of these questions was not apparent. At best, they evoked a metaphor in which Sir James Jeans¹⁹ considers the fate of blind larvae whose perceptions are limited to two dimensions of the ground's surface. From time to time this vital surface seems humid to them. We, whose powers extend to the three dimensions of space, attribute to rainfall the existence of these zones of humidity. But our thinking larvae, enclosed in their two dimensions, would be totally incapable of discovering even the beginnings of a causal determination in the distribution of humid and dry zones; their savants would be reduced to discussing

^{19.} Le Mystérieux Univers (Paris, Hermann), p. 144; Eng. ed. (New York, Macmillan, 1930).

Order in Nature and Society

humidity and aridity only in terms of probability, which would represent for them the expression of the ultimate truth.

And Sir James Jeans concludes that "events that are entirely outside of the time-space continuum, wherein are confined all human creatures, determine the course of events which unfold on the four-dimensional surface of our universe."

Thus the social order created by man is no less mysterious than the natural order. The processes that give rise to both cannot, at least for the present, be analyzed rationally.

And it is because one does not find here a subject-matter that depends on the judgments of human reason, that so many men call upon other modes of knowledge—the existence of which they feel in themselves, as they feel in themselves the power of thought—to clarify, for their own use alone, problems which, given the present state of their powers, it is as impossible for them to solve as it is to refrain from raising.

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WATER AND CANE SUGAR

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In 1929, Sir Halford Macknider gave a talk before the International Congress of Geography at Cambridge. He upheld the supremacy of water over all the elements that one must consider in the study of a region and its land. "The hydrosphere," Sir Halford said, "should be considered as the central theme in geography." There is nothing more important in the study of man than his relations with water—with sea water, river water, the condensed water in clouds, with rain or thaw, with subterranean water, the water that flows through plant sap or circulates in the arteries and veins of animals; even with the water content of blood, man's very life. Thus he expressed an almost mystical attitude toward water.

In our country, Arthur Orlando, one of the most energetic publicists of his generation, underlined the importance of water—the water one absorbs and which has such a great influence on man's life, as well as the river and ocean waters, which play such an important role in civilizations. It is true that water appears to be the dominant factor in the life of the land, in its physical as well as its cultural existence. This does not mean, however, that we must think of it mystically, as Sir Halford does.

In the sugar-cane country of the Northeast, water has always been, and

^{1.} The northeastern part of Brazil.

still is, everything. Without it, cultivation, which depends so rigidly upon rivers, streams and rains, could not have flourished from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth. Water adapts itself admirably to rich and humid soil and to the sun as well, to an average temperature of 26.5 degrees at Pernambuco, where there is an annual average of one hundred and seventy-six days of rain, as well as to a climate saturated with humidity.

Windmills could never entirely replace river or stream waters in the cultivation or milling of sugar cane. The wind, good as it is, is an unreliable element compared to the small but constant river waters. These waters, except, of course, during truly terrible droughts or occasional floods, are the constant servants of country people in their work of tilling

the soil; they do not behave as capriciously as the wind.

The wind, to be sure, has been the friend of farmers and of the sugarcane civilization in the Northeast—not so much because of the regularity of direction of its breezes as because of its extreme mildness, even in its most tempestuous moments. The wind blows the strongest in August at Pernambuco and yet its average maximum velocity is only 15.97 meters a second. Although it never attains great violence, there is almost always some wind; complete calm is as rare as a storm. This balance might explain a certain moderation in the attitudes and manners of the Pernambucans who live in the sugar zone.

The cultivation of sugar cane in the Northeast, and, one might add, in Brazil, seems to have begun in the land of Itamarca on the banks of fresh as well as salt water—sometimes a little of each simultaneously. Later, the cultivation became more stabilized under Duarte Coelho when it developed upon "land near rivers." Jérôme d'Albuquerque's patriarchal windmill was erected near Olinda, close to water. In the middle of the sixteenth century, Vasco Fernandez de Lucena, it appears, was milling cane sugar at Igayaçù. This land was irrigated and the cane sugar could be

brought to the mill in small boats.

The first donatary granted "the land of Beberibe" to Diogo Gonçalves; it contained a small but reliable river that very quickly grew to be invaluable as an aid to the agrarian colonization of the region. Diogo Gonçalves married Dona Isabella Froes and built a mill on the right bank and then a house, quite close to the river bank. Between the two, a little to the west, he constructed a chapel, so that "if one were to run a line from one building to another," says a chronicler, "one would have a perfect triangle." And these triangles have assumed, in the life of Brazil, not only an economic, but a political significance as well. They very soon became

classical: mill, master's house with senzala² and chapel. They broke the virgin lines of the landscape which was mainly one of curves around river banks even when these banks were peopled by native villages. And they introduced into this chaotic landscape new features of order and regularity: the geometry of agrarian colonization.

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Although the Portuguese colonizer was not fanatic about order, as were the Spanish, English and Dutch, it nonetheless fell to him to be the first in the Northeast to think about building living quarters and even an entire village (recife) according to a geometrical plan of urbanization. It was, moreover, he who gave to the landscape of these regions its characteristic elements of order: building blocks, which represent a method or a system of conquest, of economy and colonization, of control of the water and of the brush; he put an end to a series of fortuitous and capricious adventures in building.

The rural triangle—mill, house, chapel—was imposed upon the Northeastern land of *Massapé* as its first feature of European order. The river and stream waters of the region were subordinated to a new system of relations between man and the land even though they preserved their winding bends and their caprices. For these waters did not allow themselves to be

militarily disciplined into rigid canals as Dutch waters did.

But despite caprice, what natural elements of the region showed greater efficacy in regulating the economic and social life of the colonizers than the small rivers at the extreme northeast of Bahia? These included rivers like the Beberibe, the Jaboaton, the Una, the Serinhaem, the Tambaī, the Tibiri, the Ipojuca, the Pacatuba and the Itapua. Along their banks and along those of the streams of the lands of Massapé, the first windmills were installed. These rivers were sometimes ugly and muddy but they were almost always good and useful, suitable even for washing the dishes of the masters' houses as well as the cooking utensils of the hovels. Man's faith in the rivers was not betrayed, except perhaps by a terrible drought or an unusual flood, or by the "river fevers," or some illness which the slaves brought from Africa, as revenge of a kind against masters who were not always bad.

But these drawbacks did not obliterate the advantages of the extraordinary and faithful waters; sometimes they were so wholesome that the colonizers, ridding themselves of medieval prejudices, would invite Indians and Negroes to bathe with them, establishing a kind of ritual at

^{2.} Senzala: the place where slaves were housed, next to the "Casa-Grande" or master's house.

Iémanja³ similar to that of Capibaribe, at the summit of the site where the church, Notre-Dame de Bonne Santé, stands. Many were the times that the river waters healed feverish men and washed away their wounds.

The deterioration of the soil, due to erosion, in many northeastern areas, cannot be attributed to the rivers or to their haste to join the sea. carrying with them the rich part of the soil, but rather and principally to the one-crop system. The forests were devastated because the land was used for the cultivation of just one crop; the rich soil was left to dissolve in the waters and was lost in the sea. Due to the destruction of woods by forest fires and by the cutting down of trees in the interests of the one-crop system, the somewhat constrictive vegetation of the river banks disappeared, although it still resisted water in times of heavy rainfall and the pith of the soil was not carried away. The humus and the strength of the soil were preserved, the caroubiers on the banks of certain streams being responsible for this useful function. These banks were transformed into soft sand incapable of holding firm when the shrubbery, which was the sturdiest of its kind in the back country, was devastated. Astringent plants were destroyed in order to allow sugar-cane plantations to flourish everywhere; they were also destroyed by goats.

Alberto Löfgren observed devastated areas in the interior of the Northeast "where the water no longer stops and where the strong currents ceaselessly remove the earth until there is a complete stripping of the land..." Zones stripped of their trees and even of their most tenacious vegetation have been transformed by the hand of man in the most ap-

palling fashion.

To blame the northeastern rivers for this devastation which, in reality, is the work of human beings, is empty rhetoric. These streams of water were the thieves of fertile soil only at men's behest. The great "thief of the land," Bennett wrote in his study on land erosion in the United States, is the one-crop system. Not only does it exhaust the fertility of the fields for the benefit of a single crop, but even worse, it allows this fertility to dissolve in the river and to be lost in the ocean.

We have already sung the praises of the small rivers and emphasized their importance in the rural organization of Brazil. In a recent study, the famous French geographer, Pierre Monbeig, concurred with our conclusions. The importance of these rivers is most apparent precisely in the extreme northeastern zone of "the brush" and in the Massapé land of "Recontraction of the Brazil of the Brush" and in the Massapé land of "Recontraction of the Brush" and in the Massapé land of "Recontraction of the Brush" and in the Massapé land of "Recontraction of the Brush" and in the Massapé land of "Recontraction of Brazil."

^{3.} Iémanja: goddess of the waters in cults of African origin, parts of which were preserved in the Northeast, and in Bahia particularly.

cavo"—the areas where the cultivation of cane sugar has penetrated the farthest and where the rivers are constant and dependable. These are rivers in the manner of Sancho Panza, not the Don Quixote exuberance of great waterways. And so they lend themselves to the good offices of sedentariness and stability, to patient but in nowise empty tasks, to the familiar agricultural routine.

The acres of land granted by Duarte Coelho and his successors are situated at Pernambuco, on the low plains of the river banks with Igaraçu, Olinda, Beribe, Casa-Forte and Varzea as the first settlements and the cultivation of cane sugar as their basis. They extend along the banks of the Capibaribe in the direction of Pau-D'Alho and also along the banks of the Ipojuca; they penetrate deeply into the clayey lands and then go on to drier surfaces in the central area where the rivers struggle to go down to the brush and into the sea.

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But it was in the "Varzea" or the low plain of Capibaribe that sugar cane was first grown in the Northeast, a cultivation that was to bring Duarte Coelho so much acclaim as its leader. A little later than the middle of the sixteenth century, one already spoke of the "people of the Varzea of Capibaribe" as the real nerve-center of the colonial population, and we can say that it was here that the first Brazilian aristocracy of the "masters-of-the-mill" took root. They required both the low river plain and the profusion of lake water to develop stability and endogamy.

This plain was the first, on the Brazilian social scene, to be peopled with masters' houses that were sporadic and isolated, yet united; they were linked one to the other by both the river water and by blood, since the colonists intermarried until there was a total endogamy, cousins marrying cousins, nieces marrying uncles. This occurred throughout the entire region, at Cap Saint-Augustin, in the Ipojuca and Una plains, in the "Recôncano" of Bahia, in the Parahiba basin, at Saint-Antoine-des-Quatre-Rivières. The waters of the small rivers played a major role in this intensive endogamy of the white and "near-white" of houses on the same plain. The result was a physical type altogether characteristic of the sugarcane aristocracy: the families of the Northeast with well-defined features, vices, and manners of speaking (the Pae Barretto, the Cacalcanti, the Wanderley, the Souza Lion). This was the work of the rivers, uniting several families into a single one and forming, from the many sugar mills, a social, and sometimes an economic, system. Real clans sometimes developed on the banks of these rivers, led by the one household head who

was more important than the others, more master of the river, the water,

and the plain than the rest.

In 1577 the low plain of Capibaribe already possessed the mill of Saint-Pantaléon of Monteiro; in 1593 it possessed the Apipucos mill and in 1598 the Saint-Timèthée mill of Jiquis. These were very large mills which gave rise to smaller ones, like the portion a man gives to his child, then to his grandchildren and his nephews. These mills were fortunate in every respect: land, water, valuable forests, proximity to the sea and to Olinda, and remoteness from the Indians.

Other mills of the Capibaribe plain were erected under the same favorable conditions: that of St. Jean, St. Antoine, St. François, La Madeleine, St. Cosmo and St. Damien. They were all different from each other and almost all were named after the saints who were most beloved by the pious Portuguese. Some of them, however, already had names indigneous to the river or stream: Apipucos, or the name of a woman, Madeleine, or the surname of an owner, "Curado." 4 The various types of mill names were rarely altered in New Lusitania during the first century of colonization. Some of the mills, it is true, did have African names like Massangana, and still others were named according to the local trees or fruits: "Melancia" (Pastèque). Then there were names that were actual phrases or exclamations like "Valha-m-Deus!" (God protect me), etc. It is interesting to note that many old mill names in that region evoked an image of water: "Ribeiro-da-Pedro" (Peter's River), "Agua verda" (Green Water), "Cachoeira-de-Cima" (High Cascade), "Poço sagrado" (Sacred Well), etc.

One senses in these names a kind of cult and certainly a poetization of water by plantation people and plainsfolk. Water was a noble element in the old northeastern mill country where the factory was destined to defile the rivers. The mill paid homage to water and was not satisfied merely to make use of it.

The fine masters' houses in the interior as well as the fine bourgeois houses in the Madeleine district and in the Rue de l'Aurore at Recife, even the monasteries like the Franciscan one at Sérinhaem, were all erected to face the river. The best stairways all led down to small canoes and barges. The prows of these boats often bore sculptured heads of dogs, dragons or lions. The yayas rode in them under parasols, and the gentlemen went also.

^{4.} Curado: "protected" by some kind of magic against wounds, serpent bites, etc. (The equivalent of the Moslems' baraka.)

People would take barges to pay calls on each other. The river was honored. It was preferred to the mud and dirt of the roads along which, in the olden days, ox teams would trudge wearily from one mill to another; in the nineteenth century, carriages would jog along these roads, their springs creaking with rage and fatigue by the end of the first three miles.

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The river complex developed in such a way that it became "chic" among fashionable northeasterners to have French photographers take pictures of them in a canoe or a barge, the young ladies with their hands on an oar, the young men pretending to row. In the state of Pernambuco, or of Bahia or Alagoas, family albums are filled with old photographs that show the ladies and young men of the aristocracy seated in elegant barges.

The river bath, when it was not a ritual, like that of the "pilgrims of health" or "Poço da Panela," was an occasion for festivity. The Christmas holidays, the New Year and the Day of Kings were celebrated on the river banks. At such times, the stream would receive many languid and mannered young ladies whose mode of life confined them to the boudoir and had rendered them almost tubercular. In the river these young ladies were freed from the darkness and staleness of their sickrooms; they became children again, shrieking and swimming in the nude. The river welcomed their delicate young bodies, as well as those of the urchins who washed away the dirt and perspiration of their work in these waters. It also welcomed the Negroes who came to bathe the horses. In 1855 Doctor Carolino Francisco de Lima Campos recommended river baths in his "Advice about Health" and wrote that "for the good of the body," fresh baths in the river, with soap, besides having an excellent effect upon cleanliness, help to "fortify the tissues."

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, Tollenave saw in the Capibaribe "entire families plunging into the river and spending a part of the day in it, protected from the sun by little shelters made of palm leaves; each house had its own shelter, and near it was a small screen made of foliage for dressing and undressing." The French traveler took unawares, as she was bathing, "a young mother nursing her infant, the grandmother swimming beside her grandchildren, and the young ladies of the house frolicking in the midst of the Negroes, diving with agility and swimming to the opposite bank of the river." He even had the opportunity of glimpsing some of these young women, their legs in the air, veritable "naiads without veils."

But Tollenave's account of the river banks at Pernambuco is not limited to this voluptuous observation. This French traveler writes that it was rare to find more laughing streams than those of Capibaribe. The water was so

clear that one could see the pure sand bottom "which takes on the color of dark green emerald thanks to the reflection of the foliage, in the midst of which one sees the 'cacique' with its overhanging nest, the cardinal dressed in scarlet and a thousand birds adorned with brilliant plumage." All around the canoe in which he traveled upstream to Poço he saw from time to time "schools of little fish." He also spoke of "myriads of crabs" crawling along the banks and of "giant armadillos and agouti in the highest places, stationed before their holes." But he did not see any alligators, nor any of the enormous cururus toads which terrify the children and which are used so frequently in certain rites of black magic in the region.

Tollenave noted in the interior some possible advantages which the river offered as regards the transportation of sugar cane from the mills to the seaboard; these were often not utilized. For instance, the stream that flowed near the *Engenho Salgado* irrigated the plantations of twenty other mills, and "more than one hundred and fifty tons" could be shipped by water. But it was not used for the transportation of either sugar cane or the Negroes whom Bento José da Costa imported from Africa to work on his plantations. This was due to the unfounded belief that the Dutch had sunk three ships between Nazareth point and the reefs, thus making the passage impracticable. In actuality, the river was not utilized because of the mill masters' carelessness.

Although these rivers were not utilized, they were not despised. The greatest pleasure, at Salgado, as well as near Recife, on the banks of the Capibaribe and the Beberibe, was river bathing, at the rate of two or three times a day.

Berberibe, Tambia, and Caxanga were joyous meeting places for river baths. Students bathed there with actresses, the *shepherdesses*, *mistresses* and *counter-mistresses* of "pastoril," who came to the banks at dawn. Baths were taken early in the morning, with rum arrack and cashew nuts before the first dive into the cold water. Little Negroes bathed completely nude, which scandalized the modest bourgeois.

It was to the waters of Capibaribe and Beberibe that romantic young men, law students at Recife, confided their loves. More than one impassioned young student recited poems to his beloved, whom he glimpsed in the distance or whose presence he merely surmised behind some balcony or lighted window in the Rue de l'Aurore or the Pont d'Uchoax or the Madeleine—the balcony of a house built in mosaic, or the windows of a

^{5.} Pastoril: a popular dramatic game in the Northeast in which the traditional characters are the Old man, the shepherdesses, the Mistresses and the Counter-Mistresses.

great house or "chalet" between mangoes and bread trees. And the pale student, dressed in black, wearing a stiff collar and patent-leather shoes, would go downstream on the river in a barge, close to the bank where the young girl lived. In the dusk he would sing:

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Oh, Maria, Oh, Maria, How many sleepless nights because of you! Oh, Maria, Oh, Maria, Into your arms I long to fall.

This at the end of the nineteenth century or the beginning of the twentieth. His seniors had sung other love songs: "Ma Nise adorée," for example, or "Chiquita."

It sometimes happened that young girls were carried off by barge. Nise, Chiquita or Stella would wake up and perhaps give herself to the young man dressed in black. Maria might open her arms to him, and perchance her brown legs. Thieves, murderers, Don Juans, Cabeleira "Perruque" himself, the great sugar-cane bandit, came to Recife by barge, canoe, or raft, during dark nights. The barge and the canoe were highly prized by thieves; nineteenth-century newspapers are filled with announcements of stolen barges or canoes.

Entire families moved their rosewood furniture by barge from one house to another. The sad Negroes along the river banks suffered the hardships of slaves whose masters were not always kind. When the Abolitionist campaign occurred the Capibaribe became a liberating river for them. Fugitive Negroes streamed down the waters, hidden behind piles of wood, forage, and cane sugar, on small boats that carried sugar from the mills to the seaboard.

Water was brought to the cities in canoes and sold on the wharves. These canoes were exposed to the sun and were so filthy with refuse that Dr. José Enstaquio Gomes denounced them, in 1837, as one of the causes of poor health in Recife. He wrote a memorandum, at the request of the Municipal Chamber, on cases of erysipelas in the city.

For a long time the small boat, the canoe, and even the raft were linked with cane sugar, the Negroes of the mills and the ox teams. This relationship still exists today to a certain extent, just as it did during the time of the water mills. Not so long ago we saw the raft, the Negro, and the ox team united on a beach in the north of Alagoas, just as they were in the North-

east of 1700. The little boat was almost on dry land on the beach, and between it and the ox team the raft served as a bridge. The *cabras*, halfnaked, were loading the sugar. This is 1700 all over again.

The old northeastern mills depended a great deal on the sea and on the rivers. The mistress of the house would send Negro boys to catch crabs, pitus, prawn and siris6 in the lagoons, in the rivers and on the reefs. These fishermen who served the patriarchal house became jangadeiros, 7 as skillful as the Indians in steering rafts and canoes. They also became adept at handling the net of tucum, 8 in chasing alligators, nandus and stags along the river banks. They even modified the brutal manner of the Indians in managing a canoe; in the hands of Negroes, the oar or the raft pole became an almost pleasant instrument, sometimes even the dispenser of a certain kind of masochistic pleasure. Durval Vieira de Aguiar, traveling in the interior north of Bahia and Recôncavo during the last days of the monarchy, met barges that were poled down the river by boatsmen who were almost naked, clad only in a loin cloth or a strip of cotton around the waist, with a cap of the same material on their heads. They were described as men "who looked entirely African." "Armed with large steel-tipped poles, they leaned the other end against their hard, unprotected chests, often making it a point of honor to allow the blood to flow from their efforts."

The Negro would sing in cadence as he rowed, just as he sang as he carried the bags of sugar through the streets or Madame's piano or the master's rosewood furniture. Some foreigners speak with wonder of the precision of these Negro boatsmen's movements. Henderson saw them coming down the Capibaribe many a time.

The Negro who, in the beginning, worked only in "the green ocean of sugar-cane plantations," afterwards became equally skilled as a worker in that other ocean (the real ocean, full of witchcraft, the ocean of the northeastern coast). He became an oarsman, a *jangadeiro*, a fisherman, the patron of the small craft. Generalizations affirming that "the ocean still belongs to the Indians" seem to us inaccurate. This is true neither of the sea, the river, the canoe, raft or *saveiro*, one of the small boat. The newspapers of the first half of the nineteenth century are filled with advertisements of

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^{6.} Pitu: Large fresh water shrimp; gayamum: a species of large crab; siri: the word used for several kinds of crustaceans similar to the crab; sururu: a shellfish.

^{7.} Jangadeiros: Rafts (jangadas) of the Northeast are manned by jangadeiros.

^{8.} Tucum: a species of palm tree whose leaf has a fibre of excellent quality.

^{9.} saveiro: a long and narrow barge employed for crossing large rivers.

Negro boatsmen. There were many of them. Francisco José de Nascimento, the jangadeiro of Ceara, who distinguished himself in the Abolitionist campaign, was a mulatto, an Indian half-breed. He was known later by his war name of "Sea Dragon." And today, in the states of Pernambuco, Bahia and Alajoas, there are hordes of Negro boatsmen and jangadeiros.

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We had the opportunity recently of seeing the boats of colonial style that still continue to bring sugar and salt, wood and cocoanuts to Recife. They arrive from Natal, from Goiana, from Gravata and from Maceio. Almost all of them are blue or white. This seems to us to reflect a certain semi-Christian mysticism of our seagoing people, similar to that of women who are closely attached to the church and who make a vow not to dress their daughters in anything but blue or white as a homage to Notre-Dame. They even go so far as to consider red, so beloved by eyes that are less bound by Christian scruples, as the color befitting a harlot's dress.

Of the one hundred and fifteen small craft that we saw, sixty-three were not named after saints (only nine out of one hundred and fifteen were) but bore the names of women, rivers or mills. Many of the boatsmen, like the jangadeiros, believe in Yémanja, use the stars to guide their course, are quick to perceive the direction of distant winds, and smoke hashish in order to dream of naked women or pretty girls. But, in any case, their dominant belief, it seems, is a Christian one.

The majority of the boatsmen who work in the Northeast—at least in the states of Alagoas, Pernambuco and Bahia—are no longer Indians. One sees a goodly number of *jangadeiros* on the beaches in the south of Pernambuco and in the north of Alagoas. They live in huts that are half native and half African in style. Among these people, who are dominated by the African hashish complex, it is not difficult to find many Negroes, many mulattoes and many half-breeds—not just Indians and whites.

The Indian is no longer the master of the sea, nor of the beach, nor of the raft or canoe; he is only master of what is left of the virgin brush, and even here the Negro has proved to be a serious contender. In the northeastern sugar-cane country the Indian is becoming more and more of a myth, a rhetorical figure of speech: "the spirit of the Indian" of black magic meetings. He is merely "us, the sons of Indians, who expelled the Dutch," the familiar refrain of civic and patriotic speeches, nothing more. A full-fledged or even a predominantly Indian figure is already a curiosity, an exoticism. The half-breed native is called "China" even if he is a university graduate. In the northeastern backwoods, the European and

African colonizers did to the human scene what the cocoanut tree, the sugar cane and the mango tree did to the vegetation: they dominated it to the point of sometimes seeming more native than certain native elements, like Brazilian wood and the Indian.

Both sea and river fish are numerous in the Northeast. One finds fish in the high seas, in deep water as well as among the rocks. The rock fish, although not the best edible variety, are the ones with the most beautiful and brilliant colors. So lovely are these colored fish that it is hard to believe that they do not taste the best—the red aguiuba, the piraüna, red also, the toucan and the budien, the last two both blue. But since these are not the tastiest, only the poor people eat them, cooking them in manioc farina and serving them in pimento sauce. We have often seen the jangadas pulled up on the beach, filled with colored fish that were still alive and wriggling: blue, violet and pink, silver and yellow fish with black spots. "They are

nothing but pure beauty," the connoisseurs say.

The most successful fisherman is the one who brings in his jangadas the cavalle, nicknamed "young-girl's-leg," the cioba, the carapeba, the taïgnathese are the aristocrats of the northeastern waters; acclaim also goes to the Negro who carries large and small lobsters and the pitus in his basket. The pitus come from the Una River of Pernambuco, and are served by the mill masters of the valley, particularly for their large parties. The Corrente of Bahia is famous for its "fat and tasty" dorés. Pitu of the Una River, doré of the Corrente, fried crabs, siri, small shrimp, gayamum,6 "the old man's nail," populpe and sururu of Maceio, fish boiled in manioc farina, fried fish of the sand banks, curiman from the master-of-the-manor's own pond, fish cooked in cocoanut milk, fish cooked in sauce (muqueca, a sauce made from the oil of palm trees from Guinea, cooked in cocoanut milk and pimento)-all of this unites water, sea and river with the housekeeping and the life of the northeastern peoples. Water became a friend of the seacoast and the brush homes, whether opulent estates or hovels, since both kinds were frequently built along the banks of the same river.

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Moreover, water seems to have had an aesthetic effect on the northeastern landscape. It helped to propagate, along the seaboard of the region, the cocoanut tree of India, imported, apparently, by Portuguese colonists. This great spread of cocoanut trees was the result of the tides and currents of the sea, which washed up the seeds and deposited them on

the sand beaches.

Nonetheless, in the northeastern backwoods, the relations between man and the water were not always idyllic. Man never lacked water for his essential needs because the rivers that form a true part of the brush never

run completely dry, just as the sources of water are never completely exhausted. But sometimes the banks overflow and a real danger ensues. Great floods leave hundreds of unfortunate people without shelter. Sometimes the waters reach the master's house. José Lins de Rezo described in an extraordinary way (one of the strongest statements ever written in our language) what these floods represent for the northeastern mills. Water suddenly becomes the worst enemy of man, beast and plant.

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The northeastern African colonizer, although he was intimately and usefully linked with water, seems to have contributed to its contamination. He brought with him, in the opinion of specialists, worms that gave rise to a disease later called the malady of Manson-Piraja da Silva or Schiotosomes Mansoni which was prevalent in some river mills. He made river bathing in certain areas of the region a truly hazardous venture. It was dangerous for a man to run into the larvae of a worm which wantonly traverses his skin and mucous membranes and proceeds to consume his liver, intestines and lungs.

In America the disease is prevalent in sugar-cane zones that attracted much Negro colonization: in the Antilles, in Peru, Venezuela, Colombia and the Guineas; and in Brazil along "the entire coast to Para south of Bahia," the northeastern sugar zone and its rivers. In Bahia, the African disease was studied by a great scientist (Piraja da Silva) who finished the work begun by Manson. At Pernambuco this same disease was studied by his collaborator, Doctor Luis Tavares. The distribution of the disease was determined by Professor Meira Lins and Doctor Fernando Wanderley. The latter found that their patients came from the mill rivers of Goyana, Una, Jabater and Ipojuca.

But what remains pathological today in the relations of man with the northeastern sugar-cane plantation waters is not limited to the contamination of rivers, but extends to the powerful plantation owner's contempt for these river waters. The one-crop system of the Northeast has made a urinal of these rivers, a sewer of filthy factory waters. And these waters poison the fish and dirty the banks. The distilled residues that sugar-cane factories deposit in the river waters each year after the harvest cause a considerable reduction in the spawning of fish in the Northeast. During Christmas week in 1936, the Goyana River at Pernarhbuco received so much of this residue that the number of rotted fish was enormous and called to mind an Old Testament plague. The sturdiest fish as well as the most delicate all reeked of putrescence. The odor of rotting fish mingled with that of rotting fruit on the dirty banks of the rivers.

There is hardly one river in the northeastern sugar-cane country which

the factory of some rich plantation owner has not degraded. The houses no longer overlook the rivers; they turn their backs with disgust, with disdain. The young girls and the children bathe no longer in the river but only in the ocean, leaving the dirty river waters to the black urchins and horses. The river is no longer respected by sugar manufacturers, who formerly used it to wash their dishes, but never humiliated it. On *he contrary they honored it. They admitted it into their intimate life, they confided to it their disappointments in love; and when they were old, it was to the river that they spoke of their nostalgia for the past. They used the wharves and bridges as special retreats for conversation on moonlit nights in Recife.

These rivers went dry in the dirty northeastern cane-sugar country. Filthy streams flowed in their place, streams without dignity, which the factory owners treated any way they pleased. Thus prostituted, when the rivers rebelled they did so without rhyme or reason, flooding the hovels of those poor people who still lived on their banks and still bathed in their yellowish or rust-colored waters—waters that looked as if the entire world had used them as a depository for its excrements.

Only ghosts, with their romantic shadows, still peopled these unspeakable waters of the Northeast. The ghost of a murdered student whose corpse yet floated on the river's surface, clothed in black, a flower in his buttonhole. Or the ghost of a drowned blond child which the Siri had not despoiled, so that the little angel appeared to be intact. . . . Or again, the ghost of the young brunette who threw herself into the river, mad with passion, and whose hair turned green like that of the Yara. To Few people believe that these northeastern rivers had such a beautiful past and one so closely linked to our sentimental life.

Today the noble waters are the ocean waters, the sea that is so blue in one place and so green in another, as it washes up on the sandy beaches of the northeastern coast. Even *Iemanja* herself is no longer worshipped by the blacks of the *Shango*¹¹ in the river waters, but principally in the waters of the sea. And yet no more than a century ago these now famous beaches were only heaps of dirt, while more than a century ago they were used as garbage and excrement dumps. Here was where the pagan Negroes were buried and here, too, dead animals were left to rot; it was here that the straw mattresses used by victims of smallpox or the shrouds of the plague-stricken were abandoned.

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^{10.} Yara: Brazilian "siren" of rivers and swamps.

^{11.} Shango: Afro-Brazilian magical ceremony.

WORKERS, PROLETARIANS,

AND INTELLECTUALS

The term proletariat became ambiguous when it no longer denoted industrial workers alone.

In the writings of Marx himself, one can trace the origin of a distinction between the working class and the proletariat, between factory workers as such and the total dehumanization which the term proletariat suggests. This distinction remains a virtual one for Marx and Marxists, because neither the prophet nor his disciples questioned, officially, the coincidence of these two definitions: it is the industrial workers who possess, par excellence, the proletarian characteristics of exclusion from the community and of disintegration of all special traits. And so one does not feel the need to separate the concrete group to which the term applies from the social condition or the state of mind that it evokes.

This separation has become indispensable ever since the spread of what we propose to call the "Toynbee interpretation" of the concept. According to this definition, any group of men is proletarized that is in a civilization without really being part of it, that has lost its traditional conditions of existence and believes itself to be the victim of injustice. "The true characteristic mark of the proletariat is neither poverty nor lowly birth but awareness of and resentment at being disinherited." And elsewhere: "The

proletariat, indeed, is a state of mind rather than the consequence of external conditions."x

Thus defined, the "proletariat" is less the effect of economic causes than of wars, internal strife, urban contacts and civilization. Doubtless the peasant proprietors of Italy, victims of Hannibal's depredations, or ruined by the influx of wheat from the empire's provinces, and, even more, the English peasants, driven from the country by the enclosure of common fields, by the substitution of grazing for the cultivation of cereals, belong to this category: they have been uprooted, hurled into the anonymity of streets or factories. They have neither a recognized status nor the feeling of belonging to a class that performs an honorable and indispensable function in the collectivity.

Peasants (farmers or agricultural workers), impoverished shopkeepers, specialized workers or artisans, rendered useless by heavy industry, are "proletarized" when they are thrust toward the machine or the assembly line. But emigrants who belong to political or religious communities that are outlawed (the French Huguenots, aristocrats of the Revolution); the privileged groups of conquered countries (the ruling minority in India under the English); members of a society considered by the colonizer as more or less primitive, who are reduced to slavery far from their own country—all these victims of civil and foreign wars—exhibit the characteristics of the proletariat to a greater degree than industrial workers.

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The industrial workers that Marx knew a century ago, who abounded in Russian cities at the time of agrarian collectivization when the kulaks were uprooted, are obviously "proletarized." Are English workers who live in houses built by municipalities on the outskirts of cities, who own a radio and television set, who are members of trade-unions and are pro-

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^{1.} A. Toynbee, L'Histoire, ed. Gallimard, p. 416, Eng. ed. (London, Oxford, 1934).

^{2.} The word *proletariat* is placed within quotation marks when it is used to convey the Toynbee interpretation.

I do not believe that "a state of mind" is the best interpretation of the word proletariat. It results in ambiguities that I point out in the following pages. The state of mind of exiled French Huguenots, of industrial workers or of South African negroes can exhibit certain similarities. The objective situation of each of these is extremely different. But the matter of definition does not affect the facts and the ideas that I feel it is important to stress. Industrial workers are not the only ones who are excluded from the community. In many countries this is less and less true, while victims of racial and political persecution are increasingly penalized in that way. Other groups, intellectuals, for example, genuinely experience the alienation which the doctrine of the proletariat deals with.

tected by social legislation, nonetheless "proletarians"? And the same question could be asked about American workers.³

The difficulty of answering such questions is well illustrated by points that Colin Clark developed in this periodical. The kulak deported to Siberia, the Congo Negro transported to Virginia, the shopkeeper who sought a livelihood in the realm of production, are obviously "disintegrated." But "integration" is a vague concept. Many French workers harbor the feeling that they are unjustly treated: are they alien to the French community like the Huguenots who were driven out by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, or the Jews who were persecuted by the Third Reich, or the Algerians who work in France? In other words, if integration is measured by the individuals' state of mind, there would be many shadings between radical dissidence and a sense of complete belonging.

Most observers do not refer to this state of mind alone, which is frequently difficult to assess. To what extent is propaganda able to create, even for the most disinherited, the feeling of belonging to the community, and what right has one to decree that this feeling is illusory? Colin Clark defines integration more or less clearly by two terms: tradition and assured ownership, which mainly characterize his own idea of a normal existence or of the "good life." One can readily approve of the description of the society of the future as one in which a man would enjoy security without suffering from the harshness of authoritarianism, in which the majority of the population would work in industry and in the civil services without experiencing "the merciless impersonality of a large modern city"; in short, as a "traditionalist society without rigidity and mobile without agitation." But who can fail to see that such a society is a utopia, not in a derogatory sense of the word, and that it is unwise to compare present and future societies with this utopia?

Colin Clark cites some statistics on occupational mobility in the United States and draws the conclusion that positions have altered within the same class, making for the two-fold drawback of hereditary stratification and occupational instability. Studies of social mobility are far from numerous and general enough to warrant categorical judgments on the degree of "hereditary stratification" and of "occupational instability" in countries and eras. One of the difficulties consists in distinguishing between the mobility that is caused by change in occupational distribution (a change

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^{3.} And eventually about Russian workers of the second or third generation who are established in cities.

^{4. &}quot;The Future of the Proletarian," Diogenes, No. 2.

that is inevitable when technological progress takes place) and the movements toward the maximum and minimum potentials of individuals, as-

suming this distribution is a stable one.

The latest studies that I have been able to read, those of Natalie Rogoff, J. M. Lipset, Reinhard Bendix and F. T. Malm, all lead to similar conclutions. The occupational instability that impressed Colin Clark is here confirmed; most of the people questioned had tried many trades, it is true, but this instability is evident more particularly within a single category. Those who were employed in a manual trade spent 80 per cent of their careers in this trade. Those employed in a non-manual trade spent 75 per cent of their careers in it. The major class barrier in the United States is that which separates manual and non-manual workers. Nonetheless, according to the same study, 47 per cent of manual workers have done non-manual work at one time or another and 62 per cent of white-collar workers have worked with their hands.

Social mobility does not seem to have decreased appreciably between 1910 and 1940. The change seems rather to be in the direction of increased mobility. For example, in the higher category of occupations, taking into account the growth of social categories, the number of those whose fathers did not belong to the same category increased by one fourth. Social mobility, on the other hand, seems scarcely less in Great Britain than in the United States. In Great Britain, as in all countries, there is inequality from the very beginning—a man's education furthers his career; nonetheless, mobility toward the top or the bottom is considerable. Thirty-nine per cent of those in the higher categories (professional people and high administrative officials) had fathers who already belonged in this category. In the four highest categories the proportion of sons who descended in the hierarchy is, respectively, 61 per cent, 62 per cent, 67 per cent, 62 per cent. Reforms in the educational system obviously increased mobility.⁷

In other words, it is not evident, it is even improbable, that stratification tends to be rigid in western societies. As for occupational instability, it is indeed very marked in the United States, more so it would seem than elsewhere. Should this be confused with "disintegration," with "proletarization"?

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^{5.} Recent Trends in Occupational Mobility (Glencoe, Ill., The Free Press, 1953).

 [&]quot;Social Mobility and Occupational Career Pattern," American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 57, pp. 366-74.

^{7.} These figures are taken from a book published by D. Glass, Social Mobility in Britain (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954).

Rapid changes from one employ to another entail certain social and psychological consequences that a moralist is right to deplore. A worker is attached neither to his surroundings nor to his enterprise if he changes jobs often. His trade becomes a mere livelihood, the enterprise remains anonymous to him—a source of income, not a community enterprise in which he feels he has an interest. This state of mind seems fairly widespread in the United States. On the one hand, it has to do with the very nature of industrial society (the multiple efforts of the Soviet government to forbid workers unjustifiable migration from one plant to another proves that this phenomenon is independent of any one system); on the other hand, it can be attributed to the peculiarities of American culture, to a job with status, to the prestige accorded to strictly monetary values, to the state of mind of pioneers and emigrants, to the weakness of the individuals' roots in the community and of the communities' roots in the land. But before classifying this occupational instability as "proletarization," we must ask ourselves if the American worker believes himself to be unjustly treated. For is it not the sociologist who decrees that the worker without a steady trade is disintegrated?

One is tempted to ask the same question about Colin Clark's condemnation of large cities, about the utopia of small communities. Perhaps humanity would enjoy a more ordered, more stable life if enormous metropolises disappeared. We can only conclude that all, or the majority, of the inhabitants of large cities feel the frustrations and resentments that the

observer attributes to them or believes they must feel.

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If we return to stated facts, to definable states of mind in this century, evolution in the United States as well as in Europe has been toward the "deproletarization" of factory workers. The rise in the standard of living, improvement in housing conditions, social legislation, the power of the trade-unions, have rendered Marx's formulae on the "dehumanization" of industrial workers an anachronism. Are they in society or do they belong to it? The Social-Democratic or Christian-Socialist worker from Belgium or Germany, the English laborer, seems to me to "belong" to Belgian, German and English society; the American workman "belongs" to American society. These points are open to discussion because, the concepts used are, in essence, ambiguous. In a mechanistic society, with endless technological upheavals and a marked urban concentration, workers cannot be integrated into local or occupational communities as tightly as into regimes with a stationary economy and personal relations. The rise in the standard of living in the wake of technological progress makes it possible to give

the workers ownership of their dwellings or at least durable consumers' goods. Traditions are still lacking but one cannot help thinking that in the United States the philosophy of values and aspirations that is called the *American way of life* fulfills the integrative function formerly attributed to traditions. A society composed of men of different nationalities, language, religion, and color cannot be integrated by beliefs or habit in the same way as were historically homogeneous societies. It may well be that the Soviet version of Marxism is fulfilling an analogous function in the former empire of the tsars, where the immensities of space, the rapidity of industrial construction, the exploitation of virgin lands increased the social and geographical mobility of populations.

I do not claim that workers in European industries are radically "deproletarized." Probably the very notion indicates an ideal limit rather than a true situation. The sense of belonging to the national community that factory workers feel varies according to many circumstances: their standard of living, their relations with employers, ideological influences, the prosperity of the nation, the ruling group's manner of thinking, etc. In all the working classes "proletarian" minorities subsist, and even the majority remain in part "proletarized," either because they are against the principle of private property, which to them is a principle of exploitation, or because factory work seems inhuman to them, or because the individual feels his dignity is offended. The trend seems nonetheless incontrovertible: in the twentieth century, in Europe, in the United States or in the Soviet Union, it is no longer the industrial workers who seem to be the incarnation of the "proletariat."

II

Marx directed his attention to two classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. In his opinion the bourgeoisie destroyed the framework of feudal society and spread the capitalist method of production over the entire world. "The bourgeoisie destroyed all the feudal, patriarchal, idyllic conditions of life. Pitilessly, it severed the various feudal ties that unite the individual to his natural superior and left no other tie between men than that of naked self-interest, of the impassive payment in ready cash. . . . The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the tools of production, therefore the conditions of production, therefore the whole of social relations. The bourgeoisie, in exploiting the world market, made production and consumption cosmopolitan in all countries. . . . More and

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more the bourgeoisie suppressed the diffusion of the means of production, of property and of the population. . . . The bourgeoisie, during its scarcely century-old class supremacy, has created means of production more massive and more enormous than all the earlier generations in their entirety. . . . "8

Today we can compare the rise of the bourgeoisie within feudal society to the rise of the proletariat within bourgeois society. To justify the comparison of these two "ascents," Marx employs the same formulae—the resistance of social relationships to the development of productive forces: bourgeois property would paralyze the growth of productive forces just as feudal property had become an obstacle to the productive forces that liberated the bourgeoise. "The bourgeois conditions of production and trade, the bourgeois conditions of property, the modern bourgeois society that gave birth, as if by magic, to such powerful means of production and trade—remind one of the sorcerer powerless to control his diabolical power to conjure. For scores of years the history of industry and commerce is no more than the history of the revolt of modern productive forces against modern conditions of production, against conditions of property, which are the vital conditions of the bourgeoisie and of its supremacy."9

This analogy is entirely verbal and it would not be at all difficult to illustrate, by referring to Marx's own descriptions, the major differences between the rise of the bourgeoisie and the rise of the proletariat. If, according to current Marxian formulae, the forms of future society evolve within the old order, the rising class grows, gathers strength before the moment of definitive rupture. This was actually the fate of the bourgeoisie which, before assuming political power, retained or controlled a larger and larger fraction of the productive forces. How could a similar growth of the proletariat occur if the differences within it tend to become obscured in a universal misery? The bourgeois grew richer and more powerful within the ancien régime, the proletariat more and more miserable within the capitalist system.

Can one say that they are more and more powerful thanks to the organization of an entire class into a mass party? Perhaps; but there is another difference, a major one, between the rise of the bourgeoisie and that of the proletariat. The bourgeoisie itself exerts power when it becomes the ruling class. The proletariat, as such, cannot by itself exercise the governing

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^{8.} Communist Manifesto.

^{9.} Ibid.

functions of society. The formula—the proletariat itself constitutes a ruling class—can have two different meanings: either the leaders of the proletariat become the ruling class, or the decentralization of power abolishes the reality of a ruling class. The first meaning goes back to the Jacobin version of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the second evokes the Commune of Paris and the interpretation that Marx placed upon it.

The bourgeoisie of merchants and industrialists was a creative, privileged minority. The proletariat is the immense mass of the non-privileged. How can these two classes play comparable roles historically? The bourgeoisie is opposed to aristocracy in accordance with a process repeated a thousand times throughout history: merchants, entrepreneurs or artisans, the initiators of economic activities, the administrators of a common endeavor, occupy an ever-growing place in a society dominated by an aggressive aristocracy or by a regime of noble families. In the ancient cities, in Roman history, probably in all civilizations, one can find at one time or another an equivalent to the rise of the bourgeoisie. Never do we see the under-

privileged masses rising to the dignity of the ruling class.

In contrast to the aristocracy the bourgeoisie brings with it another way of thinking, another hierarchy of values. It places the struggle against nature above the struggle against men. It aims at mastering the forces of nature, not at challenging death. An aristocracy of work and not of war, it opposes the virtues of severity, honesty, prosperity for all to those of heroism and generosity; it believes in a progress whose benefit is not reserved for the few; it denies inequality of rank, the pessimism of the Catholic doctrine; it is virtually democratic. The proletariat does not oppose to the bourgeoisie's view of the world and its scale of values any other philosophy of the cosmos or any other system of ethics. It, too, believes in progress, in mastering the forces of nature, in raising the standard of living. To create the impression of a fundamental ideological conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat one would have to presume that capitalism does not deliver the advantages it promises and make the legal status of prosperity the stake of a fundamental quarrel; and, finally, one would have to believe a certain interpretation of materialism to be the necessary expression of the proletariat as such.

It is not clear in Marx's writings why the bourgeoisie, "which cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the tools of production, therefore the conditions of production, therefore the whole of social relations," necessarily becomes a brake on the development of productive forces. One can conceive that the laws of ownership prevent the accumulation of

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capital required by technology, or that the distribution of buying power provokes crises of overproduction, or that the opportunities for profitable investment become more and more rare. All these causes of paralysis have been analyzed by Marxist and non-Marxist economists, but it is difficult to see why the obstacles are insurmountable and why the bourgeoisie could not introduce elements of collective ownership, redistribution of in-

come, or planning as experience dictates.

The hostility of the proletariat toward private property, its confidence in collective ownership, are not the inevitable consequences of the nature of things. Hostility toward the private entrepreneur is understandable enough in the initial phase, when the entrepreneur resembles the feudal lord of earlier days and merits the name of industrial baron, and when, as a consequence of the need for a preliminary accumulation of capital, the worker is reduced to a low standard of living at the very moment when he suffers from being uprooted, from "proletarization." When directors of large corporations are on a salary and the ownership of stock is dispersed among hundreds of thousands of individuals, "proletarization" subsists in the sense that men live "en masse," without traditions and without property; but it would subsist to the same or to a greater degree if the managers were appointed by the state and backed by political commissars.

In countries whose governments claim to be proletarian, it is the Jacobin and not the "communist" interpretation that has prevailed. At least in its present phase, dictatorship of the proletariat is that of a minority party and not the dispersion of authority among local and industrial groupings. A Soviet regime holds objectives and values that are, in many ways, similar to those of an American type of government. The development of productive forces is the final aim here as well as there; the progress of science and of technology is the indispensable means for this development and, in both cases, governments are the representatives of the working people. In the United States the term "working people" is extended to include the entire population; in the Soviet Union it embraces the proletariat, the peasantry, and perhaps the intelligentsia, but the party alone is entitled to

express the authentic will of the proletariat.

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This explains the ambiguous character of the ideological quarrel that is tearing the western world apart. Viewed from Tokyo or from New Delhi, Sovietism and capitalism are merely two modalities of the same civilization, one that possesses everywhere the same essential features—urban concentrations, accelerated industrialization, new technological methods of production, the cult of the machine, etc. The controversy over

ownership, private or public, and over the way it should function, free-market mechanisms or planning, seems to involve means rather than ends, methods rather than values. Even in Europe, although there is greater awareness of the political and intellectual implications of systems of ownership and operation, similarities between the two economies with their large markets are often stressed. In both these societies, the working class is "integrated" into a regime that is represented as the best or as the only possible one. Nowhere has it become the ruling class; everywhere one governs by invoking it. In one sense it is no longer a "proletarian" class, since it is part of the society in which it lives. In another sense it has remained in both societies "proletarian," because the American worker sells his labor in the market; because the Russian worker is subject to an allotted task and an entire system of planning whose secrets he no more understands than he does the mysteries of the market.

Marx's error in comparing the rise of the proletariat to that of the bourgeoisie was confirmed by events. These have demonstrated that, within the bourgeois framework, working conditions do not grow worse but, on the contrary, they improve; that capitalism progressively "deproletarizes" the working class. Events have also shown that power was never wielded by the non-privileged, that the working masses never become the ruling class, although they remain the mystical source of sovereignty and are supposed to want what the "avant-garde" wants in

their name.

Events have also shown that these errors are usually made under circumstances that Marx himself evoked. He decreed, in apocalyptic and ambiguous terms, that the bourgeoisie's social relationships would block, in advance, the productive forces. This blocking is neither an impeding phenomenon nor an inevitable one. But in some cases the system of property—not so much its legal status as its distribution—actually paralyzes economic progress by forbidding the application of the most efficacious procedures (this is true in regard to agriculture and in part to industry in France). The more a capitalist enterprise resembles a feudality, the more it provokes protests in the Marxian manner, the more workers and ideologists are tempted to believe that the cause of all ills is individual appropriation of the means of production. From these two propositions, it follows that the favorable climate for Marxist ideology is not mature capitalism but capitalism in its initial phase, or retarded capitalism—in other words, Russia at the beginning and France in the middle of the twentieth century. Furthermore, if the Marxist interpretation stems from a spurious assimilation of the historic role of the proletariat (against the bourgeoisie) to the historic role of the bourgeoisie (against the aristocracy), this interpretation will have fewer repercussions, since society will retain fewer aristocratic vestiges. Marxist revolutions succeeded in countries which did not have bourgeois revolutions. Marxism never pervaded the United States because America never experienced an ancien régime. The role of the proletariat was conceived by an intellectual in a Germany that had neither destroyed thrones nor constructed large factories. The so-called proletarian revolutions destroy "feudalties" and increase productive forces. It is after the assumption of power that the proletariat, in whose name the revolution is made, gathers strength.

That the troops of Marxist revolutions consist of workers from major industries or of peasants does not alter the essential fact: the function of the proletariat in revolutions resembles that of the popular masses in all revolutions. The masses help to hasten the destruction of a ruling minority, to elevate another ruling minority to the throne; they do not put an

end to the circulation of elites.

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That the working class tends to be "deproletarized" by the development of industrial society, that it is not expected to transform itself into a ruling class, are two facts that seem to me obvious. I would not feel the need to mention them if they were not challenged so often. The tendency toward the "deproletarization" of the workers is misunderstood by observers, who contrast to the reality of urban civilizations the image of quite a different civilization composed of small communities, and who stress the element of disintegration which concentration of the masses and perpetual improvement imply. The governing mission of the workers is maintained by their attachment to a utopia, the dream of a collectivity without Power. But these two errors remain incomprehensible as long as one forgets that they are committed, not by the workers, but by intellectuals. The situation of intellectuals in industrial society, their activity in so-called proletarian movements, and what they like to believe about these movements, take into account these illusions.

Karl Marx, as well as Arnold Toynbee, established a close relation between the working class and the intellectual class. In Hegel's *Introduction to the Critique of the Philosophy of Law*, philosophy is baptized the head, the proletariat the heart of human emancipation. The philosophy is complete;

it remains to be realized. The proletariat rises above the philosophy by

achieving it.

Toynbee links the intellectuals with the proletariat in quite a different way. The *intelligentsia*, in the sense that the Russians used this term during the last century, was the prototype of the "proletariat." "Any community that attempts to resolve the problem of its adaptation to the rhythm of a foreign civilization is obliged to appeal to a special class to maintain the role of a transformer destined to change the voltage of an electric current. We designate the class thus created to answer this need, in a general way, by the name the Russians use: intelligentsia" (op. cit., p. 433). The *intelligentsia* is "proletarized" since it lives within two societies without being part of either of them. Russian students or writers who had absorbed western culture no longer belonged to the old Russian regime and yet were not entirely part of the western world. Alienated from the milieu of their birth, yet not integrated into the life of their acquired culture, they expressed their unhappiness by revolt.

However, is it not true that the intellectual classes of modern times, in all countries, represent the more or less attenuated features that characterize the *intelligentsia?* Let us pass over the frequent strikes staged by university graduates (although the reserve army of intellectuals is just as common a phenomenon as the reserve army of workers). Industrial civilization—that is to say, technological, optimistic, rationalist, democratic civilization—is different from the French ancien régime, just as the west is

different from the Russian ancien régime.

In the initial phase of industrialization, the intellectuals are no less "proletarized" than the working people of the *faubourgs*. The former are uprooted from the land or from their work as artisans, the latter are indignant at the gap between science's promises of abundance and the scandalous misery of the workers, even though they are equipped with machines. Both have lost their old universe and are all the more apt to feel angry, since their dominant belief is animated by greater confidence in man and in society.

The ideology that attributes a unique mission to the proletariat seduces the "proletarized" intellectual the more since the latter actually plays a leading role, attributed erroneously to the working class. It is never the former that becomes the ruling class and that wields power, but a party; and this party is, to a large extent, created, backed and governed by the intellectuals. When the old structure breaks down, when tribal chiefs, large landowners, administrators of the old school, and merchants are in-

capable of erecting or of administering a modern state, the new ruling class is recruited from graduates of western universities. The intellectuals like to think of themselves as serving the proletariat, as the executors of the

great achievements of history.

Does the development of industrial society have the effect of "deproletarizing" intellectuals as well as workers? Here again, the trend toward "deproletarization" seems to me to be incontestable, but with many exceptions and relapses. Industrialization rapidly increases the number of intellectual and semi-intellectual occupations and therefore helps to open up new opportunities for university graduates. As the number of workers grows trade-unions are organized and older workers take over positions of responsibility. Secretaries of trade-unions, men of working class origin, are often more anxious, at least in western countries, to become integrated into their surroundings than to subvert them. A working class such as that of Germany or Great Britain has demonstrated, over the last fifty years, that it had more to lose than its chains, that it preferred the advantages made possible by reforms to the dangers of violence. The intellectuals find it harder to manipulate a true working class than peasants hungry for land and a working class that is three-fourths mythical. As technology provides more and more of the benefits that are expected of it and as people become accustomed to living in a constantly changing community, the intellectual feels less and less alien to industrial society.

This "deproletarization" is always precarious, provisional, incomplete, because the intellectual who truly belongs to the community in which he lives often is not aware of this or explicitly rejects this sense of belonging. The French "revolutionary" writer of 1955 mirrors his country with remarkable faithfulness; he reflects its situation, its prejudices, denials, dreams. But he does not know this and does not care to acknowledge it, because his country, like himself, is characterized by verbal revolt against the real world. Nationalistic and optimistic, modern intellectuals cannot be critics. They do not lose, by the mere fact of criticizing, their sense of

belonging; but to escape, to break away, is a temptation.

For intellectuals as well as for workers, industrial civilization contains certain permanent causes of "proletarization." The cultivated man suffers from inevitable specialization. Prestige and money generally go to the savants or, more generally, to the experts. The predominant importance accorded to output, to efficiency, to the standard of living, to power or to wealth shocks those who have a more subtle sense of values. Nothing is

easier for the intellectual than to turn his back on a world where Babbitts, entrepreneurs, financiers and managers reign.

At the same time this displeasing world is the only one that can honor the promises of abundance to which the rationalist intellectual subscribes. He cannot take exception to technology, but only, here and there, to the uses to which it is put. In all societies that tolerate ideological disputes, the protests of the intellectuals against industrial society which, as such, is in the process of enveloping the planet, may, thanks to deliberate or involuntary misunderstanding, be directed against a modality peculiar to this society. The difference between what the university graduate believes is normal and what reality offers him is sufficiently great to give rise to a kind of dissidence.

And so we find several kinds of "proletarization" of the intellectual class: "proletarization" of the *intelligentsia* in countries where the west undermines or destroys a different basic culture; "proletarization" of intellectuals in western countries during the initial phase of industrialization, when the contrast between expectation and reality is striking; "proletarization" of certain intellectuals, contemplative men, men of culture, in a flourishing technological society; "proletarization," more verbal than real, of intellectuals in a declining nation whose regime seems incapable

of guaranteeing either greatness or prosperity.

The ideology originated by Marx of the "mission of the proletariat" gains followers among intellectuals for the very reason that they are necessary to the construction of a western type of state. In other words, intellectuals justify their own acquisition of power (perhaps indispensable) by claiming to be the delegates of the proletariat. Moreover, in France for example, the dream of the rise of the proletariat expresses confusedly the revolt against national humiliation, the resentment against American influence, the hostility to certain forms of industrial civilization. Disappointed by the trend of politics, French intellectuals have a vague yearning to attain power themselves; a nostalgia quite unrealistic: they would rather long for power than gratify their ambition.

These analyses perhaps help us to understand the state of ideological disputes in our time. Arnold Toynbee, in works published before the war, held that "the religious phase in the evolution of communism seems to be ephemeral. Stalin's nationalistic and conservative communism has definitely defeated Trotsky's universal, revolutionary communism in the Russian sector" (op. cit., p. 440). In volumes he has written since the war,

the religious aspect—Christian heresy—is once again emphasized, ¹⁰ particularly in the version of the ideology that is presented to other peoples. I, myself, would be tempted to believe that Marxism is a form of prophecy which retains a religious potential only in its militant phase. Once the party is victorious, the ideology vindicates the state and the masters of the state. One can look beyond the socialist edifice or any five-year plans to the coming of the millennium, and substitute, for the faltering enthusiasm of revolutionary fighters, the enthusiasm of builders. Inevitably, as the years go by, the ideology is affected by reality. Unless men are able to find satisfaction in a religion of the state, and this would be surprising within a civilization that bears the Christian imprint, the ideology, once it becomes official, will degenerate into a verbal habit.

The consequence of this is not that it will be inoperable. Quite the contrary; just as American ideology tends to attenuate the "proletarization" of Negroes, of the yellow race and of European nationalities considered inferior to the Anglo-Saxons, in the same way Marxist ideology is a factor in the integration of the diverse populations within the Soviet Union, even of those "converted" by the strength of the Red army. The integrative function of politico-social ideologies is a fact in the United States as in the Soviet Union, and for a similar reason: the racial and national diversity of the population and the rapidity of economic changes tend to fill the void caused by the lack of what Colin Clark calls "traditions and insured property," with the sense of participation in a collective enterprise, whose grandiose designation will be the universal republic of workers.

The true ideology, the one practiced in the United States, is probably as different from the theory of *free enterprise* as the Soviet ideology is from Marxist theory. But both countries maintain, although by different means, an orthodoxy, one of society, the other of the state. Practically no dispute subsists, either here or there, in regard to principles. Communism does not seem to be an alternative to the *American way of life*, save for a ridiculously small minority, any more than capitalism would be an alternative to Sovietism, even in the eyes of those citizens of the Soviet Union who are

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The ideological conflict remains alive in a few European countries that are hesitant to choose between these two international systems, and in so-called undeveloped countries, that is to say, those of the external proletariat. In such places the dispute is continued, by shuffling comparisons between the great powers, contrasts between the two methods of industrial-

^{10.} Cf., in particular, A Study of History (London, Oxford, 1934), IX, pp. 583-84, 620-21.

ization (private or public ownership, mechanisms of the market or planning), comparisons between the two classes of workers and bourgeois. To understand the matter clearly we must distinguish between these three comparisons.

Problems of the status of ownership in regard to the means of industrial production, II are nowadays more technological than political. The struggle between factory workers and entrepreneurs is nowhere the center of social or political conflicts. The controversy, in countries outside of western civilization or in European countries where economic progress has been slow, is, in reality, over the most efficient methods of industrialization. People are concerned with which system increases the volume of collective resources the fastest and reduces the disparity of status between the groups.

The Marxist form of prophecy is one reason for the influence that the communist parties' propaganda exerts throughout the world. But this influence is not stronger, perhaps it is less strong, upon factory workers than upon peasants and intellectuals. If there is one class that is sensitive to the truly spiritual seduction of Marxism, it is less the working class than the intellectuals. The latter are at home in an ideology that gathers the chaos of events into a single and universal interpretation, that allows undeveloped countries to surpass the west on the road of history by the mere adoption of a Soviet type of regime, which concedes the most important place to the intellectuals by invoking the will of the masses.

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Social ideologies, of which Marxist-Leninism is the latest, are introduced into the class struggle and the struggle among nations without transcending them. These ideologies contribute to the reintegration of the masses and of the intellectuals; they do not provide them with any outlet outside of profane history. In this sense, they are precarious and provisional substitutes for religion. Arnold Toynbee points to the fact that no superior religion, for the moment, has arisen from the proletariat within western civilization. Such a religion, if it is to emerge, will not be an intellectual creation.

^{11.} The question of ownership of the land is a decisive one for the peasants.

MODERN POETRY AND THE

PURSUIT OF SENSE

I

When Dante climbed on the devil's flank from the hell-center of earth he was puzzled and disturbed. He could not understand, since he had never changed direction, how he was going up now where he went down before. We have lived through a similar experience. In the old world of rational absolutes one could move indefinitely in the right direction. That was the nature of progress. But in our interwoven and tensile fields we escape one vortex only by slipping into another, and the right when followed leads always more or less to the wrong. It is like running a beast around a tree—there is the critical moment at which the pursuer becomes the pursued.

Historical progression seems always to have overshot itself, and it is difficult to say where reaction against advance ends and the counter-action of wisdom begins. Pascal turned his back on scientific enlightenment when it was scarcely under way. Was this the traditional closure to the coming good, or prophetic fear of the confusion to which that good might lead? Was it backward or forward vision, or a blending of the two in one? When Adams and the early American conservatives resisted democratic

reforms, was that an inertial timidity before the great experiment, or a sober insight into the dangers of mass leveling? And if their doubt, which had roots through the eighteenth century and Hobbes back into the Middle Ages, had much of the staid and retrogressive, why is our disillusion thought to have less? Again, why did the reactionary opponents of socialism at the time of the First World War seem so narrowly bigoted, while today far-sighted idealists sadly admit that free capital and liberalism were more subtly connected than they knew? It seems the wisdom of one time shades into the folly of another; the blindness of yesterday becomes the experience of tomorrow. It is no denial of a great past to raise the standard of advance against it.

All this is peculiarly the case with the modern arts, because they most of all are freely and symptomatically expressive. The reversal we observe there is typical of the whole turning of liberalism upon itself, of that unaccountable retreat in the midst of advance, which has troubled every

phase of life.

The way in which painting, music and poetry have moved from the traditional ground of reason and emotion into the subjectively private, the symbolically abstract, the indefinably fragmented, is well known. To attribute this to the usual strangeness of a new art is absurd. Modernism is not new. Its greatest exemplars are either dead or men of advanced age. Their most daring work was done almost a half century ago. There has been plenty of time to get used to it, and plenty of cultivation by all the sophisticates of museums and schools; but in its haunting power it remains as remote and challenging as ever. Indeed, that is the source of its special drive. Schönberg, Picasso, Joyce, Rilke, may never get any easier; for their difficulties are indigenous. Finnegans Wake will stand as a landmark of ultimate exploration, of the intellectual refinement which attains at one time the limit of sophistication and complete impenetrability. It is a type of the liberal suicide, a book that is great in the exact measure that it can never be read. But under these conditions how is it great? The paradox has been forced upon us. We are passing through the dead center of a reversing field.

Everywhere, with all the arts as with political life and education, we hear it spoken that a change must be made. When the limits of freedom have been exploded, as of class leveling, one must move the other way; and when avant-garde painting or literature has done everything extreme that can be done, when the subconscious has been hounded down every Freudian alley, the abstract reduced to the black square on the white

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ground or to the isolated and fragmented word, there comes a point when further advance is retrogression; there is no more discipline to break, no new surprise worth exploiting; what was daring and advanced against the academy becomes academic and petty in its turn, more alarmingly so as it cannot be distinguished from charlatanism and fad.

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The nineteenth century resistance to modernism was mostly of traditional and shocked bourgeois. We have lived through much since then, and the statement now that the arts should return to the common ground of rational and emotional communication is not necessarily reactionary. We hear it, in fact, from the most advanced minds.

It may, however, be quite impractical, for to advocate and achieve are different things. The direction seems good, but unfortunately all efforts to restore the arts to sanity have gone more or less bad. Does this spring from the hopelessness of the task or merely from the confusion of program?

Confusion there has obviously been, but that may be inescapable. The kind of sensible wholeness which, one way or another, great art requires, has been identified with what makes easy sense to the common man. We have been told of the popular nature of Medieval art. The cathedrals have been mentioned in this connection with the public procession for Duccio's Maesta. This is partly wishful thinking. The fact is, Medieval art, like Medieval literature, was in the hands of a highly cultivated minority, and though it obviously interpenetrated the folk and the folk it, it was not actually in their hands. Perhaps great art has never been creatively shared by more than a few. That was the case in Dante's day, it was the case in Pound's. Yet under this apparent invariance lies an actual and devastating change. There has been a conscious cleavage of the intellectual, withdrawing from tradition and responsibility into cult and mode, and of the now literate masses, descending from folk life (the germ of all creation) to papers and comics and pulp. And this has been made the more painful by our democratic awareness of it, our guilty romantic conscience that art should elevate and be accessible to all.

Some break from responsibility altogether; others try to sustain an impossible standard. It is not surprising if the cry for wholeness and sanity has merged with that for the most blatant popular effects. This has gone to the greatest extremes in the governments of mass dictatorship, in Russia most of all. New Deal art was a gentle sally in the same direction and showed, like American advertising, that accessibility may have nothing at all to do with genuine art.

If we look at American literature we find the same confusion, the same

merging of motions of sanity and democratic appeal, and here as elsewhere we discover that almost everything of this kind is aesthetically suspect. Frost is the obvious exception. He saves himself by holding to a local tradition in which the private problem may still be treated with sincerity and charm. As such he remains peripheral. The average modern cannot share his heritage or his desire. Sandburg, who has tried to break into universal dimension, has been positive at the risk of turning anyone's—not only aesthetic but intellectual—stomach. Robinson also made a great effort, but could never get his man against the sky, being essentially a negative spirit determined on a positive act. Even Hart Crane had such desires and pursued disordered affirmation off his symbolic bridge.

The mere mention of Hart Crane reminds us that it is not only the forlorn attempt to appeal to the people which has undermined the poetry of wholeness. Something far deeper stands in the way. The very efforts to affirm have been subtly transformed into denial—not denial only, but cult, indirection, the hermetical obscure. It is not only that we dislike the banal; we dislike the defined. As Mallarmé said: "To name an object is to do away with three-quarters of the enjoyment of the poem." Perhaps that is a sacrifice poetry must come to; yet it is astonishing how far a metrically disciplined concentration of explicit sense disappoints those who assume they desire it. Whether we are held by the fascination of the oblique or "the strange disease of modern life" it hides and reveals, the road we have called essential is somehow aesthetically distasteful. We are repelled by every motion toward that which we ostensibly desire. So Ezra Pound receives the poetry prize for 1948—that historical year in which we are still living, though the calendars have changed.

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Poetry, like other organic things, is woven in the field of the whole and the part. Arnold, in a letter to Clough of October 28, 1852, regrets that the influence of the Elizabethans should have led Keats, Shelley and others to seek "exuberance of expression, richness of images," without perceiving that "modern poetry can only subsist by its contents," that it must keep language and style "very plain, direct and severe," while it presses "forward to the whole." He means, of course, the rationally explicit whole.

We, a hundred years later, looking back on a modern poetry which has done almost the opposite, subsisting less and less by entire content and always more by wild richness of imagery, may be inclined to doubt if the influence of the Elizabethans can be so much to blame. They, like poets of today, were creating in tension which is always present, like the conflict of the free individual and the ordered society, its prototype, to which it bears historical relation. But the beauty of a free society on its road to ruin, even Plato, who despised the phenomenon, was ironically forced to allow: "Such, my friend, I said, is the fair and glorious beginning out of which springs tyranny" (Republic VIII). And there is a similar beauty, so "fair and spangled," a haunting richness and magic about the uninhibited word. Images, like the decoration Ruskin writes of, can be servile or free. The images of Arnold, for example, stand in a kind of servitude to his rational communication, the sense of the whole:

He too upon a wintry clime Had fallen—on this iron time Of doubts, disputes, distraction, fears. . . .

(From "Memorial Verses" on the death of Wordsworth, 1850)

But these lines of Yeats:

Your hooves have stamped at the black margin of the wood, Even where horrible green parrots call and swing. My works are all stamped down into the sultry mud.—

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I have seen them riding seaward on the waves Combing the white hair of the waves blown back When the wind blows the water white and black.—

though in other things quite unlike, have this clearly in common—the magic of the unservile image.

Modern poetry has put this temptation strongly before us; and our aesthetic sense, like Plato's democratic man, once it has got the racy flavor of irresponsible beauty, is unwilling to give it over. So poetry like the state continues until "all things are just ready to burst with liberty."

For us, moreover, the irrational has a peculiar seduction. We have lived through an era of inspired disruption, and the radiance we have shed, like that of a nova or exploding star, was the product of wild release and

I. David Daiches' interpretation of the passage from Eliot (see Poetry and the Modern World) that the sea is a symbol of creation and destruction, the waves of life-rhythm, etc., as it is pure projection, does not make the images any less rebel to reason. It gives evidence rather for what follows, that the mind will always seek meaning, even to the point of pretending it is found.

exploitation, the dissolution within and without of the stern old checks and traditional frames. Visual art too, which used to submit constructive imagination to the severity of a representational canon founded on the sense of validity and meaning in the world, equally cast off submission, enjoying in the splurge of every resource one of its most brilliant periods, until it finds itself at present distracted, reluctant to go back, yet unable to press forward without committing artistic suicide.

In this crisis, the question where shall the arts go is the same as a greater one, where shall the democratic individual and society go, and that of a greater still, where shall the liberated spirit go? No wonder that in revolu-

tionary situations art has become an aspect of politics.

A year or so ago Kenneth Burke gave a lecture in Chicago called "Poems or Bombs," in which, extending the nineteenth century thesis of the need for a great poetry to save the race, he outlined the fundamental requirements for an epic of the future—it must glorify human values in the historical mode of western culture, must be rationally and emotionally satisfying—but one can imagine the rest. Having labored with no ultimate success at such a project off and on for several years, I was of course interested, and spoke to Mr. Burke afterwards, only to find that he had no notion what such a poem would really be, could not envisage it, had in reality no hope of its coming. We talked of modern poets and he mentioned with special praise Theodore Roethke. It was in fact at the same time that a group of poems by this "vegetal radicalist" appeared in the Sewanee Review, introduced by Mr. Burke with a long and serious essay. For purposes of illustration we may quote almost at random:

"And in the lines immediately following ('When I took off my clothes/ To find a nose,/ There was only one/ For the waltz of To,/ The pinch of Where'), besides 'to' in the sense of 'toward,' there are suggestions of 'two' (here present in its denial, but the meaning most prominent to an auditor who does not have the page before him), while there are also connotations of 'toe' as in toe dance (which in turn stirs up a belfry of bat-thoughts when we consider the narcissistic nature of this particular 'toe dance,' recall similarly the 'last waltz with an old itch' in 'The Long Alley,' and then flutter vaguely in the direction of the infantile 'polymorphous perverse' as we think of the briskly and brilliantly conveyed corybantics in the brief lyric, 'My Papa's Waltz,' the account of a child snatched up and whirled riotously in a dance by his tipsy father). And since 't' is but an unvoiced 'd,' we believe that on the purely tonal level, 'God' may be heard in 'gate.' "' etc.

The problem of veiling masturbation in poetry and of criticizing such pas-

sages with the elevation they require is no doubt an interesting one, but it is quite the antithesis of finding a poetry of integrated power.

As for Roethke himself, a few lines will sufficiently illustrate the point:

Sit and play
Under the rocker
Until the cows
All have puppies. . . .
My father is a fish.

This last line might mean many things. "Fish" is a wonderful word for the critics. The Freudian and sexual significance could be developed at length. Or it might be interpreted as an evolutionary symbol, the organic stages of spirit; or religiously. There might be a literary allusion to Faulkner "My mother is a fish," or even by chance association to Nietzsche: "Silbern, leicht, ein Fisch schwimmt nun mein Nachen hinaus. . . ." It might in fact mean a variety of things, but as it stands it means nothing. It is like Malevitch's black square into which he read infinite significance:

"Suprematism compresses all of painting into a black square on a white canvas. I did not have to invent anything. It was the absolute night I felt in me; in that, I perceived the creation, and I called it suprematism. It expresses itself in the black plane in the form of a square."

But it is not our intention to criticize Roethke's poem, or even Mr. Burke's more pretentious prose. It is enough here to observe how a critic openly advocating a poetry of reason and message is actually drawn

toward the last extension of fragmentation and disease.

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It is not without cause that talent is still diverted down the exhausted beds of post-symbolist veiling and associative magic, or that Mr. Burke, even while speaking of "Poems or Bombs," manures the intellectual soil in which bombs best root and grow. The democracies too, even while realizing that what the world chiefly needs is responsible vision and reasoned control, continue their undisciplined splurge toward suicide. And it is the way of evolution that when an order has expanded and spent itself, the genes that have known adaptive radiation do not return to unity and strength; the branching of the future must begin as lower stages on the evolutionary stem. Poetry cannot return effectively to direct and positive statement until it has something profound and sensible to say. Is that to be found in western society? The creation of a responsible art, as of a responsible freedom, depends on one thing: the regeneration of an innately

Modern Poetry and the Pursuit of Sense

humanistic philosophy, of a belief in man and the organizing universe, a relation of human values to eternal values.

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We are always trying, rightly or wrongly, to read rational sense into things, even into modern poetry. This is no quirk of the human mind, but its organizing essence as mind.

Leonardo tells of seeing pictures, forming them from the random mottlings of a wall; and the critic does the same, often with no less refractory materials, when he interprets subconscious doodlings the poet himself refuses to clarify. Even the last cultivator of the meaningless, the most arcane exponent of the fad, still dives for sense and comes to the sur-

face with some rare mystery he pretends to understand.

Certainly the important poets, even of the modern indirection, leave an impression of the deepest content, not only of imagery and feeling, but of a concealed sense as well. Their pupils and lackeys tell us "a poem should not mean but be," yet in saying so, it is clear they mean. The masters too work under the same contradiction. They refuse to explain their poetry, that would rob it of magic; at the same time they are possessed of the prophetic urge. Like Cassandra they are burning to tell all, to grapple with past and future, mysteries and death, to enter action and change the unchangeable; yet such a spell of secrecy is laid upon them that whatever might advance the explicit clarification required by reason, feeling repudiates and the aesthetic sensitivity avoids.

Rilke wrote to his sister (a manuscript letter, see the article by Dr. Ernst Zinn in Antike und Abendland, III, p. 249, footnote): "Das Sonett" (number sixteen, that is, of the Sonnets to Orpheus, which had perplexed critics and been explained, in keeping with the prophetic character of Rilke, in various symbolic ways) "muss man wissen—oder erraten—, rechtet sich an einen Hund; ich mocht's nicht anmerken. . . ." The sonnet, that is, is addressed to a dog. This, he tells her, one must know in order to understand the poem, or must infer. Yet he did not wish to point it out, since that—he goes on to say—would have spoiled the mystery. Here is the typical contradiction of wishing at once to hide and reveal. Since the romantic movement when the new universe and order had first to be shaped, we may observe the heightening of this singular paradox: that the men who have labored under the greatest urgency or prophetic calling have been the most driven into the incommunicable obscure,

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until in our time enigma has become the cant watchword for the profound.

It can be objected that some sort of poetry of enigma has existed before. Indeed, if we examine the tendency to the obscure in western literature, we will find three principal waves where it appears, one the modern, the other two in a sense anticipating it, though actually different in nature. All these come at critical periods of spiritual reformation and stress. In these periods we find apparent precursings of modernism not only in poetry, but in painting, where the representational canons are twisted or torn, and in music, where tonality, melody and balanced form tend to dissolve or be transcended.

The two peaks of tension are the Late Renaissance and the Revolutionary-Romantic, centering around 1600 and 1800. The phenomenon is of course partial, but in the first period is illustrated in art by the sequence from Michelangelo's last Pietà (the Rondanini, 1555-64) through late Tintoretto to El Greco; and in lesser northern mannerists, as Jacob de Gheyn II, a similar tendency appears, where spatial forms are distorted into patterns of stress. In music there is the daring expansion of chromaticism, which leads from Vicentino and De Rore, through Giovanni Gabrielli to the twelve-tone summit of Gesualdo, and over the North with Sweelinck, Weelkes, Hassler and others. Poetry at the same time seems most to break the rational frames in Italy with Michelangelo and Campanella, and in England rises through the School of Night experimentation ("What Geomantike iaw howles in mine eares, / The ecchoized sounds of horrorie?") toward the violence of early Donne and the strange transcendence of Lear, where the highest truth can take form only in the formless, the mad. As for the Revolutionary rupture, it is represented in painting especially by Füssli, Blake and late Gova, and in music by the "dissonant" and dynamic that runs from Storm and Stress Mozart to the late works of Beethoven, culminating in the Grosse Fugge. In literature Blake again claims attention, and in Germany late Goethe and more especially Hölderlin, in whom message becomes increasingly cryptic as it grows more profound. As for the genuine modern break, it does not come until the late nineteenth century, with Hopkins in England, the Symbolists in France, and with their well-known contemporaries in music and art.

Obviously this is over-simplification. One can say that anticipations of modernism appear elsewhere in Western Culture, particularly in the Middle Ages, where contemporary art finds fascinating affinities, and contemporary music as well—as a comparison of later Stravinsky or Hin-

demith with fourteenth century Ars Nova will reveal. But that was before the rational canons of Western communication were formed. All medieval abstract and obscure, as with Dante, who is rich in it, exist in the limits of the inherited synthesis of trans-rational faith (by which it is defined), and employs the pre-rational and pre-humanist techniques of Gothic style. It affords, with Thomistic philosophy, an aesthetically secure region for the disillusioned flight, an escape in our day from the dangers of Promethean and transcendental continuance. But precisely in its offer of technical avenues, it evades the real inner problem of the modern challenge and the modern mind. Even Pound, who is scarcely a transcendentalist, has said "Aquinas" map not valid now" (Letters, p. 323).

Other tendencies to modernism can also be found, as in the seventeenth century, though in a rationally formulated medium; and surely one can trace a series of links through Nietzsche, Wagner, Braudelaire and many more, to join the revolutionary wave to our own—are we not ultimately children of the romantic heart? But this is only the sort of thing that must be expected of general patterns drawn from an organic complex. What is important for us is not the precise number of anticipations of modernism that can be found, but that the modern abstract is essentially different from them all

The obscurity of Michelangelo and Campanella springs from the compression, often into sonnet form, of the profoundest meaning. But the poems are explicit and whole. Milton is difficult at times for similar reasons and with a comparable quality, though never as ruthless as Campanella. The obscurity of Shakespeare is of a different sort. It actually transcends reason and lives in suspension, but only as a floating phase of a directional whole, relativism shaping tumultuous and inexplicable affirmation. Donne, as Coleridge implied of him ("Wit's forge and fire-blast, meaning's press and screw"), courts tension for its own sake. But his fantastical also builds into the ultimately rational and explicit, just as his disillusion and bitterness are stresses in a vigorously confident frame.

Even the romantic anticipations are essentially affirmative. Affirmation has moved into the inner realm of private symbol and myth, and has absorbed the first burden of disillusion with its loneliness and question. But it remains affirmation, forming as such the revolutionary content of the poem. So with Blake and Hölderlin. Obscurity is forced upon them by the nature of the task and age; they have not yet learned to cultivate it for its suggestive charm. If Goethe appears to do this at times in the second part of Faust, it is again a shifting feature of a complexly suspended, but af-

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firmative and directional whole. The closest anticipation of modernism is that small fragment from Hölderlin, written near the time of his madness, "Hälfte des Lebens" ("The Half of Life"), which we may translate with liberties:²

Wreathed with yellow pears And with wild roses, hangs The land in the sea, O blessed swans, And drunk with kisses You dip your heads In the holy sobering water. Where alas shall I catch At blooms in winter, where At the light of sun And earthy shadows? Speechless and cold Stand the walls, in the wind The yanes clatter.

But the imagistic strangeness of this is in part appearance only. Here, as always, is the great theme of Day and Night, Winter and Spring, which runs like a unifying ground through all his poems. It is in this symbolic history that the poet must live, a prophet in darkness of spiritual dawn, and even this small fragment, under the surface, is possessed by the larger theme.

From these precursors the modern is distinct in many ways. Flaubert's famous letter stands before it like an inscribed portal ("Lasciate ogni speranza"):

"I am turning to a kind of aesthetic mysticism. When . . . the exterior world is disgusting, enervating, corruptive, and brutalizing, honest and sensitive people are forced to seek somewhere within themselves a more suitable place to live. . . . The soul, unable to overflow, will be concentrated on itself. We shall see a return of world-sicknesses. . . . Books like the Satyricon and the Golden Ass will be written once more, containing on the psychical plane all the lush excesses which those books have on the sensual."

 Mit gelben Birnen hänget Und voll mit wilden Rosen Das Land in den See, Ihr holden Schwäne, Und trunken von Küssen Tunkt ihr das Haupt Ins heilignüchterne Wasser.

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Weh mir, wo nehm ich, wenn Es Winter ist, die Blumen, und wo Den Sonnenschein, Und Schatten der Erde? Die Mauern stehn Sprachlos und kalt, im Winde Klirren die Fahnen.

3. Correspondence, 2nd series, Vol. II (Paris, 1907), p. 129.

Modern Poetry and the Pursuit of Sense

Through this portal of disillusion the modern grows to the expression-istic self-wounding or the withdrawal of abstract. Between itself and the romantic pain it erects the scaffold of indeterminate suspension. Its infinite meanings grow toward vacancy: "Paralyzed force, gesture without motion"; they become scarcely meanings at all, haunting intuitions of the meaningful meaninglessness of things, the all-meaning which is void. Of this the first burst was power, the great glimmerings of the pre-war abstract. Rilke carried it as far as anyone. That is what saves his particular aesthetic mysticism from its otherwise pervasive unwholesomeness. But its lingering indirection is the escape of a world which has little direct to say. Thus William Carlos Williams, "Between Walls":

the black wings of the hospital where nothing will grow lie cinders in which shine the broken pieces of a green bottle

Against this precise trailing out of the oblique, Hölderlin stands more as a pattern of what we would wish a future poetry of direction to be, than of what we can accuse the late modern of having been:

But when the One of all dies on whom most
Beauty hung, whose ways wonder bred, fore-marked
Immortal—when heaven (or earth) has drunk him,
And the living lost meet eyes of enigma,
Nor can touch one on the other; when not sand
Only or bent willow negates his presence,
But all sounds of temple and cries of people,
Until no more through the void earth or heaven
Remains one drop of spirit—what is this thing?

The seed-time of the soul, cumbered in darkness, Dumb to its own life, but the rains shall reach it; Weary the winters, at the last comes corn.

(Free paraphrase from Hölderlin's Patmos)

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In English the most important modern poets are of course Yeats and Eliot, so their position in this matter is of some concern. Eliot's is the easier to define. He fulfils perfectly the paradox of the wordless prophet: "The word within a word, unable to speak a word, / Swaddled with darkness." From first to last it is clear he sees the waste and is driven to alter it. But this calling is opposed by the absence of passion, faith and will. The self-balancing and self-doubting mind—"Because I do not hope to turn again"—renders all that impossible: "Iam no prophet and here's no great matter." Paradox buttresses on paradox in the refined perfection of withdrawal: "Teach us to care and not to care." It is the fate of all his characters, who are all an image of the self and age. He has only to say: "I would meet you upon this honestly," for you to know that what follows will be evasively obscure. For that is his honesty (which remains admirable), the supreme honesty of hollowness, of the liberal anaemia.

Where Yeats stands with regard to philosophic sense is more difficult to define. In one way he is a summit of the subjectively obscure, working through Celtic and personal symbols of such magic that we are half content to let meaning alone. There is the amusing case of the line from "Among School Children," first printed with The Tower in 1928. The passage appeared: "Soldier Aristotle played the taws / Upon the bottom of a king of kings." I knew a young poet at an eastern university who used to repeat that whole stanza, with "golden-thighed Pythagoras" and the rest, and say it was the most hauntingly beautiful thing in the language. He assumed playing the taws was a game of some kind, and had scarcely inquired about the king of kings; but that did not trouble him at all; the motion and imagery excited him so far that sense was left behind. He could not tell me, of course, why Aristotle was called a "soldier" (except that it fitted the "movement"), and in fact no one else could, because the line was supposed to read: "Solider Aristotle," contrasting him with Plato, who had just been mentioned. Now this is pedestrian, and my young poet fought when it appeared that Aristotle could no longer, rationally, be a man of arms. So much for the charm of unservile imagery. But the strange thing is that this error went through about fifteen printings and was never mentioned or corrected until the last edition of Yeats appeared.

Of course this is merely an anecdote; it does not prove too much. But what it pleasantly indicates, any reader of Yeats, either of the poems or of

Modern Poetry and the Pursuit of Sense

the almost unparalleled mystery of A Vision, can confirm—that in one sense he is a master of the subjective veil; every communicable meaning cloaks itself under the "little silver trout," "the dolphin's mire and blood," or "those horrible green birds."

And yet in another sense Yeats remains a speaking prophet, one of the most determinedly philosophical of moderns. The most puzzling symbols often fit into a fairly simple scheme of thought, building the antinomies of a vitally transcended Platonism:

O chestnut tree, great rooted blossomer, Are you the leaf, the blossom or the bole?

And he tells us himself, though really it is not so simple:

We were the last romantics—chose for theme Traditional sanctity and loveliness.

Certainly no one can be more explicit than Yeats when he aims that way, as in "Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen," where he contrasts the pre-war dreams and ideals with the bestial reality:

And planned to bring the world under a rule, Who are but weasels fighting in a hole.

This has the direct impact of passages of great statement from Milton, Dante, and Goethe:

Licence they mean when they cry liberty; For who loves that must first be wise and good.

Milton, Sonnet XII

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No other poet of our time has shown this power. Yet we must observe that Yeats achieves it only in passages of criticism or attack, in which our age is still potent. The affirmative generalization—

Nella sua voluntade e nostra pace,

Dante, Il Paradiso

or

All is best, though we oft doubt, What th' unsearchable dispose Of highest wisdom brings about And ever best found in the close;

Milton, Samson Agonistes

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Kein Wesen kann zu nichts zerfallen! Das Ew'ge regt sich fort in allen, An Sein erhalte dich beglückt!—

Goethe, Vermächtnis

appears a lost art.

But that is by the bye. At any rate, we have as much reason to look for profound meaning in Yeats as in any poet of our time, and as much difficulty to find it. I stress this fairly obvious truism because of what follows.

Now of all Yeats' poems, one of the most certifiably significant is "The Second Coming" from 1921. It is well known. The first eight lines give a concentrated statement of the dissolution of our time, the fall of the West:

... Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.... The best lack all conviction, while the worst Are full of passionate intensity.

Here again we have powerful explicit statement also of the negative kind. What follows is more difficult. The poet feels that some revelation is at hand: "Surely the second Coming is at hand." A feature of our many cyclical theories, which have more or less been dubbed Spenglerian though of various origins, is the coming of Revelation or mystical faith in a decaying civilization. In so far as this Coming contributes to the destruction of the old order, the quietly traditional and material way, it is ruthless and cruel. It is, in short, dogma and martyrdom, and is feared by the stagnation which in another part of its being seeks and desires it. The personal history of this is common; it is the history of saints, who must sacrifice to become; and there is the parallel history of an age. The prototype was the savingly destructive coming of Christianity into Rome. The evidence of the duality is the enigma of the Dark Ages, the pitiless divine of Spiritus Mundi. The projected return was anticipated in our own period, where a late-cycle material culture seemed on the point of destroying itself. As in the age and decay of the individual body ("An aged man is but a paltry thing . . . unless / Soul clap its hands"), so in history we are forced from the whole chestnut-blossoming of life, into the dire antinomies of spirit and bone.

In this way I had interpreted the poem, the more confidently as I seemed to find the same idea in Eliot and elsewhere.

It is not without motive that I have summarized the problem here. I had the opportunity of talking with Mr. Eliot recently in Chicago. Knowing he was reluctant to discuss his own poetry, I aimed at the notion of culture cycles, Yeats' "The Second Coming," then as I have just done, through a mention of his own works, asking in effect what he thought of the matter.

Mr. Eliot answered, in his retiringly beautiful way, as if I had made no mention of his own poetry at all. As for "The Second Coming" of Yeats, he said, he had assumed it was a negative work, describing an age of decay and the coming of the Antichrist. Now as I understand it, if the Antichrist has modern significance, it is as a symbol of the violent substitute for religious faith, whether Nazi, Communist, or another. And this almost entirely reverses the meaning of the poem. It is only natural that I should still prefer my own reading, feeling as I do that Yeats has expressed similar ideas often enough—as in "Two Songs from a Play":

The Roman Empire stood appalled: It dropped the reins of peace and war When that fierce virgin and her star Out of the fabulous darkness called—

to make me reasonably sure of the thing. But that T. S. Eliot should take the opposite view came as somewhat of a jar.

In the conversation that ensued, Mr. Eliot, with gentle diffidence, expressed opinions about the unparaphrasable quality of a poem which are not unusual: if the poet had meant what you can say in other words, he would have said it; that the poet is wise not to explain his work, for that is to limit it to what now after the experience he remembers himself as having consciously intended; but in this he assumes false authority. A poem rather, said Eliot, grows and gathers meaning as it is variously read and interpreted.

Now that a poem transcends its rational content in prose is such a commonplace, not only of our generation but of others, that I doubt if anyone would be found to deny it. But if somewhere in poetry the reason must be abandoned for that leap into the unknown, the radiance, the symbolic and associative light, there must still be some kind of a jumping-off place, and the reason plays a part in getting us there. It is well enough for a poem to develop meaning as different people read it, but for it to change utterly

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from black to white, from a poem of the physical cruelty of spiritual rebirth, to the horror of physical and anti-spiritual birth, is carrying it rather far. The truth is, a poet cannot have his cake and eat it too. He cannot say a definite thing clearly if at the same time he wants to leave himself open for saying something profound he did not intend but that some admirer may read into him. In the same way, a painter cannot paint a man if he wishes to leave you with the feeling that it may be a horse if you prefer. And that the poet is so unwilling to affix and confirm, even in regard to a central and important matter like "Christ the tiger" ("Gerontion"), shows a certain weakness and tendency to evade the responsibility which, from the prophetic tone of that, as of most of the poet's utterance, it is clear he is driven to assume.

I ventured to suggest as much to Mr. Eliot, and to remind him that Yeats was unfortunately dead; that it might have been better had he cleared up such matters beforehand; that he, Eliot, was still alive. . . .

But the only answer I received was the withdrawing enigma of his smile.

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Now in the death, old age, or imprisonment of most of the leaders of the avant-garde, in the "Little Magazine" trailing out which has already been enough illustrated and can be documented abundantly by every observer, we perceive that the modern abstract has been in general the expression of man reduced from humanity to function or confronted with that reduction, of nature desiccated out of organic interplay to symbolic paradigm. In this analysis and exploration the first and greatest found triumphant calling. The followers pursued where they could not lead, beginning in the void in which they were born. That was more and more the smart place to reside. They also talked of new directions and thought themselves leaders. It was Golaud offering guidance to Melisande: "Venez avec moi. . . ." "Où allez-vous?" she asks. And he: "Je ne sais pas. . . . Je suis perdu aussi. . . ." It is the paradox of the lost guide. Cassandra mad to reveal and her revelation mad. They abandoned space-time for the "boum" of the Marabar caves. In opposition to this, the new organic reaffirms the meaningful concordances of spirit and matter, of the world and man.

Most of our poets, it is clear, have felt they were living in a lost age, a time of disruption and despair, that life in such a period was fever and disease, that their own fragmentations, fixations, auto-eroticisms, or what else, were somehow expressive—provided they were obscured and subtil-

ized to the level of the symbolic abstract—of the general fragmentation and neurosis. It is also clear that some older members of the avant-garde look for just this tendency in the younger men they are to favor (not necessarily because they seek disease, but because they require the hectic shimmer of associative skill that seems at present to accompany it); they look, in short, for those who are exploiting the roads of rupture which they themselves have exploited before. So Eliot commends Kenneth Patchen, and some aimlessly complaining verses come out in a printing that flaunts charlatan excess.

But the time of reversal has come. Our age is certainly not the most placid of history; it has its horror; it has also its challenge, its majesty of vision. Every modern endures an adolescence of lamenting the fashionable world-disease. But if he has the adventure of spirit in any way at heart, he soon learns that there has never been such a time for transcendental building and self-contemplation as in this radiant and tumultuous even-

ing of the liberal West.

We have had enough snivelling and retreat and aesthetic elaboration of despair. Is man a beast? Of course. We are habituated to it. That is the field in which spirit labors. Let it labor. Has the Western hope and dream, the flight of freedom, led under mushrooming clouds to its own waste and confusion? The wise knew it long ago. Goethe knew it; Milton knew it; Bruno knew it, and in the image of Icarus welcomed the flame. This too is an element for the life of spirit, antidote to the self-deception that has lain a hundred years upon us. Armageddon has always waited around the corner, whether for the individual or culture, the earth or solar system, or the assumed world of matter crouched before Judgment—what difference? Death is the universal death, spirit the eternal protagonist. The problem is to live in this stress with integrity. Our wars have not altered the situation. The film over the meaningless and void is no thinner than ever, the spectacle of life on that film grander than before. The spiritual malady of our time is mostly of faint heart—a kind of green-sickness in girls.

Against currents of pettiness and obstacles of specialized jealousy, the Western mind gropes through the new sciences and organic history toward the philosophic synthesis its destiny requires. Against the incredible meanness of the pulp-literate masses and modish anaemia of the literary reviews, the Western tongue awakes to the splendor of its singing task, the honest expression of this culminant human adventure. Let those who teach and edit and print know this for their charge, the vision they must

encourage.

Not that it will therefore be a popular thing, or will save Western society or depend on that salvation. Had the achievement of Plato hinged on restoring the Greek city state, we would not know the meaning of the shadows on the wall of the cave. Of course in one sense the spirit of a new poetry is also the spirit of renewed freedom, being the wisdom and will to live affirmatively in the highest drama of mind. But the fruit of this spirit may spring in "a garden enclosed," in the private life, not in the public. And it may be difficult of access, as much so as the fashionable obscurities of today. Its complications, however, will be those of responsible profundity, opening to reason, involving the explicit and affirmative core. Such is the fruit that will appear, and its token and sign will be wholeness.

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PHILOSOPHICAL SYMBOLISM AND THE USE OF THE MYTH AMONG ARAB PHILOSOPHERS

Philosophical symbolism is first of all a concrete interpretation of abstract truths. It permits one to become aware of the complex realities of intellectual and moral life by borrowing the cloak of symbols and myths whose external meaning disguises their esoteric significance. Plato's use of the myth is a characteristic example. The Platonic myth is, in reality, merely the concealment of a thought which, according to the philosopher, seemed too daring and too advanced for its period. If one wishes to explain the ideas that affect the suprasensible world, one cannot avoid using concrete symbols or alluding to them by the use of figurative meanings. Concrete symbols and myths make it possible to examine doctrines in allegorical form, wherein the imagination is given full rein, combining its freest fantasies with underlying truths. Symbolic thought proceeds in this way, by imagery and analogy, in contrast to logical thought.

Moreover, philosophical symbolism is a method that consists in interpreting religious dogma and ancient systems by attributing to them a symbolic value. Rites and dogmas conceal the ideas reserved for a small number of initiates; nonetheless, their secret can be uncovered by those who make a thorough study of all the kinds of available information that relate to ancient beliefs.

^{1.} Cf. L. Weber, "Quelques caractères de la pensée symbolique," Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale, Vol. XXXVI, No. 2, 1929.

This twofold characteristic of philosophical symbolism is to be found in all Arabic myths and particularly in those that we shall attempt to elucidate.

There are many symbolic myths in Arabic philosophy. We find, for example, in the writings of Avicenna the myth of the bird, the myth of Hay-ben-Yagzan, of Salaman and of Absal, and the allegory of destiny. We also find symbolic poetry and parables. The poem of Ibn-Sina entitled An Nass (the soul) is a marvelous example of symbolism. Moreover, there are many symbols in the writings of Gazali, particularly the myth of the bird, the comparison of the universe with a palace, and many moral tales. The myth of Hay-ben-Yagzan reappears in more poetic form in Ibn-Tofail's philosophical novel. Ibn Baja's book, entitled The Solitary Regime, can be considered the most perfect expression of Arabic symbolism. Noteworthy too is the use that Moslem mystics and the Brothers of Purity make of symbols.²

To give a clear and distinct idea in this article of all these myths would require too detailed an analytical study. Therefore I will limit myself to the examination of two examples: the myth of Salaman and Absal and

that of Hay-ben-Yagzan by Ibn Tofail.

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The myth of Salaman and Absal is cited many times in Arabic philosophical works. It is invested with very diverse forms. It was often transformed and it finally evolved into an epic written by the Persian poet, Djami. In the form reproduced below it is presented as having been translated from the Greek by Hunein, son of Ishak, and there is good reason to believe that it is of Alexandrine or Hermetic origin.

A second version of the Salaman and Absal tale exists. It is attributed by Thoruci to Avicenna. However, the Hermetic tale and the Avicennian tale are very different from one another. In order to assess the changes in the story accurately we would have to have the entire text of Avicenna's tale. Unfortunately, thus far no manuscript has been available, and so we shall

limit our study to the Hermetic version.

Once, a long time ago, in the ancient days before the flood of fire, there was a king named Hermanos-ben-Heracl. This king owned the country of Roum which extended to the banks of the sea and included Greece and the land of Egypt. He was a very scholarly and a very powerful man, well-versed in the science of astrological influences. His master, Aquliquoulas, who had taught him all the occult sciences, a wise and very old

^{2.} Cf. M. L. Massignon, La Philosophie orientale d'Ibn Sina et son alphabet philosophique, Cairo, 1952.

Philosophical Symbolism and the Use of Myth among Arab Philosophers

philosopher, was an ascetic and lived in a cave. Once every forty days he dined off of a few wild vegetables. King Hermanos often consulted him.

One day the king went to the wise man and complained that he had no heir. Indeed, this prince was not attracted to women; he detested any traffic with them and refused to approach them. The sage advised him to take a beautiful and good woman at the moment when, upon rising, the sun would give him a male child. He refused. Then the wise man told him to substitute a mandrake for the woman and to transform it into a living child. He devoted to this task all the resources of his art. To the organism thus constituted was joined the form of the soul and it became a complete human being. The child born in this manner was called Salaman.³ A beautiful eighteen-year-old girl called Absal was chosen to nurse the baby. She took good care of the infant and this delighted the king.

To reward Aquliquoulas, Hermanos ordered, at the former's request, the construction according to his plans of two immense monuments capable of resisting the onslaughts of both fire and water. These were the

two great pyramids.

When there was no longer any need to nurse the infant, the father wanted to separate the nurse from his son. However, moved by the child's sorrow, he consented to allow her to remain. But when Salaman grew to puberty his affection for Absal changed to love. Dazzled by this woman for whom he felt a great passion, who was so submissive and obliging, he would not accede to the repeated remonstrances of the king—this parent who begged him not to dim the bright light of his intelligence by enslaving himself to a woman.

"Leave that libertine, Absal, alone," he said. "She can do you no good. Remain pure until I find for you a fiancée from a higher world who will bring to you the grace of the Eternal. Know, oh beloved son, that women are makers and instigators of evil and that there is no good in them. Do not give any place in your heart to a woman; your powers of reason will be enslaved, the brightness of your view obscured, your entire existence

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Carried away by his passion, Salaman did not heed the king's advice. He repeated to Absal all that the king had said and she advised him to pay no heed to it.

"He wants," she said, "to deprive you of true pleasures for the sake of aspirations that are largely illusory, to cut you off from immediate joys in

^{3.} Salaman is the name of a tree, the name of a place and the name of a man, according to Nasir-ed-din Thouci. Cf. Commentaires des Isharat (Cairo, 1325 A.H.), p. 102.

exchange for remote blessings. As for me, I submit to you, I give in to all your caprices. You are intelligent, you have a will of your own. Go and tell the king that you will not leave me."

The young man reported Absal's words, not to the king himself, but to his vizier, who gave the king the message. In great sorrow the king summoned his son and remonstrated with him again. But realizing that he could not make him change his mind, he agreed to a compromise. Salaman was to divide his time in two: one half was to be given to the study of wisdom, the other to his passion for Absal. Although the son consented he kept his promise poorly.

Then the king decided to ask the wise man which opportunity he should seize to do away with Absal. His vizier discouraged him from carrying out this plan. Rumors of this discussion reached Salaman who hurried to warn Absal. Together they sought a means of foiling the king's plans and of protecting themselves from his anger. They decided to flee to the banks of the western sea.

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Hermanos discovered the flight of the two fugitives by using a kind of magic flute pierced with seven holes which permitted him to view seven surrounding countries. Using magical charms, the king then deprived the young couple of the means of satisfying their passion. However, he did not separate them, but they were plunged into the cruelest of torments.

Salaman then decided to return and to plead again with his father.

"The throne," the father said, "demands your exclusive attention; Absal also wants it and the two are not compatible. You cannot put your hand on the throne and ascend it while Absal clings to your foot, just as you cannot ascend the throne of heaven while Absal's love clings to the feet of your thought."

And he ordered that the two be chained together in just the way he had mentioned in his first analogy—the hand of Salaman tied to the throne and Absal bound to Salaman's foot. When night fell he ordered their fetters removed. But, taking each other by the hand, they went together and threw themselves into the sea. The king commanded the spirit of the water to save Salaman. As for Absal, he let her drown.

When Salaman was certain of Absal's death he was about to die of despair. The wise man, in response to the king's request, went to his aid. He promised to resurrect Absal on three conditions: that the young man would conceal nothing from him, that he would imitate everything he saw the wise man do, and that he would love no other woman save Absal for the rest of his life.

Philosophical Symbolism and the Use of Myth among Arab Philosophers

From then on, every day, Salaman saw the image of Absal, who came to visit him in the cave. On the fortieth day, in answer to the wise man's prayer, the face of Venus appeared in the place of Absal's. Salaman fell violently in love with it. He no longer wanted to hear about Absal, who was about to be returned to him forever. She had become hateful to him. But, once his new passion was gratified, Venus, in turn, became indifferent to him. Then his mind became whole and healthy again. It was purified of the disorders of love which had brought it down from the level of wisdom to that of pleasure. He succeeded to his father's throne, cultivated wisdom, and became not only a great king, but the leader of a great religious sect. He ordered that this story be inscribed upon seven golden tablets⁴ and that these be placed in the pyramids at the head of his father's tomb.

After two floods of fire and water, when the world was once again repopulated, divine Plato appeared. Knowing how much the pyramids contained of sublime knowledge and precious treasures, he wanted them to be opened. But the king of that era refused to give him permission. Aristotle was more fortunate. Alexander the Great gave him permission to open the door according to the rites that Plato had indicated. He took out the golden tablets which contained this story.⁵

This, in general terms, is the story of the first allegory. It would be difficult to say precisely whether a tale of this kind contains, in the author's view, a definite philosophical system, or whether it is merely an important symbol into which anyone can interpolate something of his own thinking. However, we would like to point out that this myth was obviously adapted to neo-Platonic philosophy and that subsequently it was deliberately modified by Avicenna, who changed it in accordance with his own system of thought.

The following interpretation is given by Avicenna's commentator, Nāsir-ed-din-el-Thouci: King Hermanos represents active intelligence; the sage typifies higher wisdom shedding its light upon active intelligence. Salaman stands for the soul of reason, sprung from active intelligence and independent of bodily things. Absal is the ensemble of animal faculties. Salaman's love for Absal indicates that the soul is attracted to sensual

^{4.} On the motives inscribed on the seven tablets placed in the pyramids, cf. Bidez and Cumont, *Mages hellénisés*, II (Paris, Société d'Editions "Les Belles Lettres," 1938), pp. 338, 319, n. 8; 324, n. 12.

^{5.} Cf. Tis'Rasa'il, Cairo, 1325 S.H.; Nasir-ed-din Thouci, op. cit.; Henri Corbin, Avicenne et le récit visionnaire, pp. 241-259; Carra de Vaux, Avicenne (Paris, Alcan, 1900), pp. 290-298.

pleasures. The flight to the western sea represents the soul's submersion in things perishable; the punishment—ungratified love—illustrates the persistence of the soul's evil tendencies after the bodily faculties, weakened by age, became less active. Salaman's return to his father denotes the inclination toward perfection and repentance. The two lovers' suicide in the sea is the collapse and death of body and soul. Salaman's salvation indicates the survival of the soul after the body's death. The loftiness of his love for Venus represents the pleasures of intellectual perfection. Salaman's ascent to the throne is the soul's achievement of perfection. The pyramids, enduring throughout the centuries, symbolize corporeal form and matter.

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The names of Salaman and of Absal are therefore symbolical ones. Something of Adam is indicated in Salaman, just as Absal typifies paradise. Ibn Sina, in the *Isharat*, cites a story in which these two names appear; they seem to be part of the old Arabic tradition. "Know," he says, "that Salaman represents yourself and that Absal represents, allegorically, your degree of knowledge, if you are among those who are addicted to knowledge. Now, if you can, find out the meaning of this allegory." 6

Ibn-el-Arabi in his book, An-Nawadir, also cites a story in which the name of Salaman, or Sulaman, symbolizes goodness and salvation while the name of Absal, or Ibsal, symbolizes evil. In any case, as Thouci says, this is a story of a man who pursues something that he attains only little by little and that elevates him to higher and higher degrees of perfection. Generally speaking, Salaman stands for the higher level of nature and Absal for its disorder.

Thouci, who assumed the task of deciphering the meaning of this Hermetic tale, says, first of all, that on the basis of a preliminary reading it does not seem possible that the drama of the romance is what Avicenna thinks it is—namely, that Absal "represents the degree of mystical knowledge that the adept achieves." At first glance, it is true, Absal's role and her fate seem to run counter to this meaning. But actually the problem rests on a deeper level of understanding. Avicenna, in referring to Absal, is thinking of the adept's progress in mystical knowledge. Our Hermetic tale is also merely a description of the phases of spiritual initiation. An agreement should be possible at one extreme. To achieve it, the spiritual

^{6.} Ibn Sina (Avicenne), Livre des Directives et Remarques, translated by A.-M. Goichon (Paris, Vrin, 1951), p. 484.

^{7.} The Avicennian tale attempts to demonstrate the triumph of man's intelligence over sensual passions, which is plausible. According to Gauthier, Salaman symbolizes the soul's reason, and Absal, speculative intelligence. Cf. Gauthier, *Ibn Thofail* (Paris, Leroux, 1909), pp. 68-85.

experience of Hermeticism would have to be translated into Avicennian terms. This interpretation is not impossible, and it is what Thouci attempted to do in a limited way.

This myth was used by the Persian poet, Djami. His romantic theme is but another variation of the one that Thouci attributes to Avicenna. When Djami speaks of the nurse caring for the child, he describes her in these terms "When it was time to sleep she sat straight up in her bed and burned like a night-lamp at his side. At dawn, when he awoke, she seemed to him like a golden doll." And it was in these passionate terms that this prim poet spoke of Absal's death: "How can I explain the catastrophe that has befallen me?" Salaman asked. "Would that it had pleased the heavens that I might perish with you and that with you I might pace the roads of nothingness, that I might be freed of this body that weighs heavily upon me and that I might taste with you the eternal joys." 8

Pursuing an analysis of this first example a little further, we will deal with other analogies and other philosophical truths. But, for the moment, let us content ourselves with isolating the first characteristic of Arabic symbolism as it appears in the myth of Salaman and Absal. This myth is an ensemble of obvious imagery adapted to the exigencies of Moslem neo-Platonism. The abstract notions seem empty, their content is indiscernible. However, the content does exist; it merely escapes us. To understand it

one has to have recourse to sensible images.

The use of symbols, of course, is satisfying to the masses. Men of inferior caliber are not encouraged to try their hand at philosophical interpretations. They do not allow themselves to encroach upon the preserve of philosophers and to interpret the religious symbols which disguise truths.

And so there are mainly two classes of men: the common man who is incapable of understanding hidden truths, and the philosopher, who alone is competent to investigate the semblance of things. This is made particularly plain by an analysis of symbolic poetry and of the myths of *Hayben-Yagzan*.

This is not the place to deal with Arabic symbolic poetry. But we would like to mention the poem entitled *An-Nafs* (the soul) in which Ibn Sina sings of the soul's descent into the body which, without it, would be akin to decay. The soul finds itself imprisoned there and yearns for the higher universe it has forsaken. At last, liberated by the death of the body,

^{8.} Djami wrote the story of Salaman and Absal in Persian and it was translated by Bricteux (Paris, 1951). On the life and work of Djami, cf. Ali Asghar Hikmat, *Djami* (Teheran, 1320 A.H.).

it ascends to the universe whose mysteries are now accessible to it. Ibn Sina says:

"In all its protective grandeur, a dove has descended to you from the very depths of the heavens, hidden from the sight of all the initiated, yet unconcealed by any veils."9

It is not difficult to interpret the symbols of this text. The dove is the universal soul, the depths of the heavens represent isolated intellects; the descent is an emanation and the veil denotes the sensory world.

In the same way, in a poem by Ibn Arabi, 10 the land of Najd signifies the mind, rain denotes knowledge and the solitude of the desert symbolizes mystical exercises. The camel stands for abstract reason, the female camel is religion and fire represents spiritual enlightenment.

In a comparison of the universe with a palace, a theme that Gazali developed at length, the king is God and the vizier represents the active intellect or the angels in whose hands God has placed the power to govern the world. The court that surrounds the vizier's chamber is the sky which contains the twelve signs of the Zodiac, which are the seven planets. The four captains of the foot-soldiers are the four elements: water, earth, fire and wind.¹¹

Avicenna's commentary, which appears in the thirty-fifth verse of Sourat al-Nour, is a well-known one. According to him, the "niche" is material intellect and the lamp represents intellect acquired through action. Since the Orient is the place where there is light and the Occident where light becomes obscured, the expression "that which is neither of the East nor of the West" is extended to include the nature of reflection—neither purely rational nor purely animal. Finally, fire is the light of universal intellect.

Let us now go on to the philosophical novel entitled *Hay-ben-Yagzan*, the living son of the vigilant, by Ibn Thofail. This romance contains not only the symbol of Hay-ben-Yagzan, who represents the active intellect, but also the symbols of Salaman and of Absal. Ibn Thofail changed Absal to Assal and made him a far more vital symbol.

In order to understand Ibn Thofail's purpose in this romance, and to appreciate its symbolic value, a brief, general summary of the story is indispensable.¹²

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^{9.} M. H. Masse's translation published in Revue du Caire, June 1951.

^{10.} Cf. Ibn Arabi, Mohadarat-el-Abrar, p. 107.

^{11.} Cf. Carra de Vaux, Les penseurs de l'Islam, Vol. IV (Paris, Guethner, 1923), p. 165.

^{12.} The characters Hay-ben-Yagzan, Absal, Salaman got their names from the master Abou Ali. On the Avicennian tale of Hay-ben-Yagzan, cf. Corbin, op. cit.., p. 161.

On a desert island in India, situated at the equator and, thanks to particularly favorable conditions, in the center of a heap of fermented clay, a child is born, without mother or father. According to another version, a tidal wave cast him upon this island in a coffin; his mother, a persecuted princess living on a neighboring island, supposedly had to entrust her child to the sea in order to save him from death. This child is Hay-ben-Yagzan. He is adopted by a gazelle which nurses him and takes the place of a mother. He grows, observes, thinks. Endowed with superior intelligence, not only does he learn to meet all his needs with great ingenuity, but, making full use of both observation and reasoning, he soon discovers, on his own initiative, the highest physical and metaphysical truths. For instance, the gazelle that had nursed him grew old and ill: this saddened him, and he tried to understand the cause of its troubles. He found that he must first study himself and understand his own senses. The animal dies and he tries to find out if the trouble was in its chest. Using stones, he makes an incision between the ribs and studies the heart and lungs.

In this way, all of Hay's youth is devoted to learning, to the manual and physical arts. The rest of his life was to be spent discovering religious philosophy and practicing it. The philosophical system which he finally evolved led him to seek in mystical existence an intimate union with God. He withdrew to a cave and trained himself to separate his intellect from the external world by the exclusive contemplation of God. It is at this moment that his relationship with Assal began. Assal was an inhabitant of a neighboring island, a member of a pious sect which believed in revealed religion. Convinced that the island was uninhabited, Assal went there to devote himself in peace to an ascetic life. Assal taught Hay the art of language, and was astonished to find, in the philosophical system that this singular Robinson had discovered, a transcendental interpretation of revealed religion. He took Hay to the neighboring island which was governed by the pious king Salaman, and urged him to spread word of the sublime truths that he had discovered.

Filled with pity for the people, Hay tried to reach out to them. But he failed. Our two wise men were finally obliged to acknowledge that pure truth is not pleasing to the masses, enslaved as they are by sensual pleasures, and that, in order to penetrate their commonplace minds and to influence their rebellious wills, truth must be clothed in the symbols which constitute revealed religion. And so they left these poor people forever, advising them to practice, like the inhabitants of the cave, the religion of their

fathers. They returned to the deserted island to live the higher and truly

holy life which few men are privileged to do. 13

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This, briefly, is the essence of the story of Hay-ben-Yagzan. What, exactly, is the point of this curious novel? We have already stated that its main purpose was to show the conformity of religion and philosophy. We could say more precisely that this tale makes a clear distinction between three categories of men: the common man, the enlightened religious man, and the philosopher. In Ibn-Thofail's novel, Assal represents enlightened religion and Salaman, involuntary faith. Philosophy could not be better symbolized than by the allegorical person of Hay-ben-Yagzan who represents, as his name indicates, the incarnation of active intellect in man. An autodidactic philosopher in the fullest sense of the term, Hay-ben-Yagzan successively elevated himself to science, then to speculative philosophy and finally to ascetism and ecstasy. His meeting with Assal was that of true religion and philosophy which soon took cognizance of their fundamental agreement. The failure of their venture in the populated island symbolizes the incurable blindness of the masses, their absolute incapacity for any philosophical interpretation of religious dogmas.

The author of Hay-ben-Yagzan intended that his novel should exert some influence on its readers. Arab philosophers believed in the possibility of spreading philosophical truths to the masses. To present a philosophical thesis in the attractive and allegorical form of a novel, abstract thought had to be disguised by imagery, concepts had to be transformed into people, and reasoning into episodes. What the author of Epistle to the Jews said of faith can be almost as accurately applied to the philosophical myth: a visible demonstration of invisible things. The masses require an obvious interpretation of abstract ideas because their minds are not sufficiently ele-

vated to grasp philosophical interpretations.

Averroës, for example, divides human minds into three categories, each one superior to the last and each requiring a different approach. The lower category of humanity is the masses for whom it is necessary to employ symbols. Superior to them are men of some education for whom symbols are not suitable but who need to penetrate a little way into the inner signification. These are called dialectical men. At the top are the philosophical spirits who require neither oratorical persuasion nor symbols; the method of pure logic is suitable to their needs and truth should be demonstrated to them in all its clarity because these are men who require

^{13.} Cf. Léon Gauthier, Hay ben Yagdhan, a philosophical novel by Ibn Thofail. The Arab text and French translation (Alger, 1900).

Philosophical Symbolism and the Use of Myth among Arab Philosophers

proof. Each class is obliged to believe in proportion to its degree of intelligence, and it would be a mistake if a man of the people tried to reason like a philosopher. It is said that the prophet Mohammed one day asked a Negress slave who had been converted to Islam:

"Where is God?"

"In the sky," this simple believer answered with candor.

The prophet was pleased with her answer and freed her. She belonged to the category of the masses who are restricted to the external meaning of revelation. A man of the second category, a dialectical man, would perceive the symbolic nature of the question. He would realize that to situate God in the sky, as if it were a dwelling, is to make a limited being of him. A man of the second category would answer: "God is everywhere."

Finally, a man who requires proof, namely, a philosopher, would understand this symbol of the second category as well as that of the first category. Purging his mind of the last vestiges of sensible representation, he would know that to speak of God as being everywhere instead of localizing him in the sky is still to make a corporeal being of him. A man of the third category would answer: "God is nowhere, he is in himself."

From what we have just said it is evident that the purpose of the myth and of symbols was to direct the masses, step by step, to an understanding of hidden things. "The people," Gazali said, "must refrain from questioning everything. This is as imperative as it would be for a man who cannot swim to refrain from plunging into the deep sea." I Ibn Sina, at the end of his book, *Al-Icharat*, also says it is inadvisable to teach philosophy to the profane, to the ignorant, to all those who are not endowed with a zealous intellect and who lack practice and habit. Is

The highest degree of faith, in the opinion of the masses, is to be found in the Koran. One must not expect anything more than this of the masses. Greater understanding is beyond them. ¹⁶ It is very dangerous, Ibn Roshd says, to divulge the truth to people who cannot grasp it. Prudence dictates the manner in which one should communicate with others: according to their intellectual ability. In order to fully appreciate the reason for pru-

^{14.} Gazali, Le préservatif de l'erreur (Damascus, 1939), p. 102 of the Arabic text.

^{15.} Les Isharat, translation by A.-M. Goichon (Livres des directives et Remarques) (Paris, 1951), p. 525. "If you divulge this science and waste it, God will decide between you and me. And God suffices as a judge" (p. 526).

^{16.} Ibn Sina, whose exegesis is philosophical in form, strongly advises against making available to the people a literal interpretation. Cf. Risala adhawiyya, pp. 46 and 49. L. Gardet, La Pensée religieuse d'Avicenne (Paris, Vrin, 1951), p. 139.

dence one must analyze it in the light of the reaction which, in the Moslem world, put an end to the development of philosophy.

As soon as the power and the authority of Islam passed from the jurisdiction of the Arabs, a spiritual race, and from that of the Persians, who were a particularly speculative people, into the jurisdiction of the Turks and the Berbers, philosophy was no longer cultivated in the heart of Islam. The Turks put their military strength at the disposal of Islam and everywhere they re-established orthodoxy. In the Orient, then in Syria and in Egypt, they crushed the schism of heterodoxy, believing that certain tendencies toward Karmaism were linked with it. They gave to orthodox Islam its definitive form. One even saw Arab princes destroying, not without regret, philosophical books, in order to please their fanatical subjects, composed largely of Berber elements who clamored for the persecution of all philosophers whom they considered impious detractors of religions. One way for the philosophers to escape the wrath of the people was to have recourse to the myth. Thus they could administer to these sick minds interpretations of an inferior order couched in symbolic and imaginative terms.

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The inability of the masses to grasp profound truths helps us to understand the twofold attitude of Arab philosophers. Ibn-Roshd was an absolute rationalist when he spoke to philosophers; he was anti-rationalist when he addressed the masses. All those who have been taught the dignity of the symbol must take into account the feelings of the people. Avicenna, if we are to believe Gazali, only pretended to be a believer out of selfinterest and to please the people. He practiced the religion of his childhood and followed the customs of his country, not so much in order to receive God's grace as to preserve his property and his children's security. Prayer was merely a kind of physical exercise for him, to safeguard his health. He claimed that God forbade the use of wine to the people, but not to philosophers. 17 This explains why Avicenna, because of his great wisdom, could drink a good deal of wine without any ill effects. His nights were spent in philosophical discussions, refreshed by wine, and his days were devoted to political matters mixed with religion. The purpose of his pious practices was to put a brake on the enthusiasm of the masses, to deter them from murder and quarreling, to protect them from the fury of their passions. But what has the philosopher, who does not belong to this

^{17.} Avicenna said, "wine is forbidden because it stimulates unfriendliness and quarrels; but since I am protected from excesses by my wisdom, I drink it to sharpen my wits." Cf. Gazali, Le préservatif de l'erreur (Damascus, 1939), pp. 149-150.

Philosophical Symbolism and the Use of Myth among Arab Philosophers

ignorant class, to do with such narrow restrictions? He is ruled by science, which enlightens him and relieves him of the need to submit to authority.¹⁸

This twofold attitude of philosophers springs, not as was frequently suggested, from their lack of intellectual integrity, but rather from their doctrine of the conformity of religion and philosophy. Therefore, when one perceives contradictions between the sacred text and conclusive philosophical proof, this discord is only apparent; there are always means of resolving it. The means are allegorical interpretation. To reconcile the equivocal verses in the Koran, the orthodox scientists were led to distinguish between the apparent or metaphorical and the internal or deeper meaning in a sacred text; and they resolved their problem by discovering beneath outward symbols an internal significance that did not lend itself to controversy. These equivocal verses must not be taken too literally. From the standpoint of the masses, who are unable to perceive these contradictions, they are of no importance and they serve to warn scholars that they must reconcile these contradictions by interpretation, by rediscovering, in the form of divergent, incoherent symbols, ideas that are in harmony and that clarify each other.

Symbols and allegories therefore spring directly from the interpretation of the Koran. God, who is supremely wise and perfectly informed, said things in an obvious way in order that the majority might understand the holy scriptures. Averroës said, "God has given to two of his servants, who have no access to proof, the grace of bestowing images and symbols upon very obscure matters. This is why the Koran pictures paradise as a garden where rivers flow." ¹²⁹

Whosoever practices interpretation, ta'wil, is therefore one who wrests statements from their external semblance and returns them to their true meaning. That is why the term ta'wil, when combined with tanzil, represents both complementary and contrasting terms and notions. Tanzil actually denotes positive religion, the literal revelation dictated to the prophet by the angel. Ta'wil is etymologically and inversely to bring back the true and original meaning of a work. In short, tanzil's relationship with ta'wil is that of the symbol with what is symbolized. It is that of the

^{18. &}quot;Often," says Gazali, "one sees one of the philosophers reading the Koran, attending religious ceremonies and prayers, and extolling religion. When one asks him why do you pray since prophecy is false, he answers: It is exercise for the body, the custom of the country, a means of protecting one's life. And yet he does not refrain from drinking wine and from performing all kinds of abominations and ungodly acts." Gazali, op. cit., p. 149.

^{19.} The Koran, II, 25; III, 15, 136, 195; IV, 12, 56, etc.

zahir (apparent) with batin (interior), of the majaz (metaphor) with

haquiquat (truth).

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However, it is not enough to say that the interpretation of symbols corresponds with an attempt to clarify the intelligible meaning hidden behind every purely sensible reality. "Such a theory," says Corbin, "would certainly fail to take into account both reality itself and the autonomy of the universe. The symbol is a mediator. . . . This is not a matter of clarifying, of abstracting. . . . The soul must suffer at that moment and effectuate a transmutation." ²⁰

From what we have said it is evident that Arab symbolism comprised a twofold characteristic: on the one hand, it contained an obvious interpretation of abstract truths; on the other, it implied the existence of two truths, religious and philosophical, which are in complete harmony despite their apparent contradictions. Philosophers are called upon to interpret religious truths allegorically in order to reconcile them with philosophical truths. They must also transform philosophical truths into vital symbols so that they will be acceptable to the masses.

This sensible representation is, moreover, the kind of thing in which Arab authors have always excelled; all Arabs are poets and make use of imagery in their writings. Their use of allegories coincided with a deep need of their spirits; the abundance of symbols in their proverbs and moral

tales testifies to this.

Moreover, the prophet appeals to the imagination of the masses, not to their reason. There are symbols and precepts which philosophical reasoning could never discover, that are wonderfully appropriate for the masses and that spring uniquely from the prophet's intuition. The symbols he perceives and popularizes are subject to the influence of social life and have a powerful effect upon the crowd's imagination. Their content depends upon the constitutive factors that represent the state of awareness of a society or of a group.

But these symbols so necessary to the people are of absolutely no use to philosophy because the knowledge that they constitute is something eminently precarious, variable and often intangible. If philosophy makes use of them from time to time, it is not for purposes of reasoning but only to the extent that what is vital in it comes into contact with ordinary life. The philosopher, as a man, needs symbols. Philosophy as such has no need

for them at all; it is entirely self-sufficient.

^{20.} Cf. H. Corbin, op. cit., p. 301.

REVIEW ARTICLES

V. Gachkel and S. Viderman

PSYCHOSOMATIC HYPOTHESES

AND RESEARCH

That the soul is united to all the parts of the body jointly.

Descartes, Les Passions de l'Ame

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We are witnessing today a prodigious progress by the medical sciences in their methods of investigation and treatment. The discovery of antibiotics has revolutionized the treatment of infectious diseases; surgical techniques, based upon safer methods of anesthesia and reawakening, and upon the perfection of a complex and exact instrumentation, have made it possible to perform more and more daring operations.

The improvement and multiplication of laboratory researches and of anatomico-pathological studies, the discoveries in endocrinology and bio-chemistry—all this extraordinary progress has culminated in greater knowledge of disease and in more effective therapy. The positive results of this potent analysis have entailed a fractioning, a sort of splintering of the totality which the sick man constitutes.

Psychosomatic medicine seeks precisely to recapture, amid the specialization of techniques, the fundamental unity of the being, both body and spirit, and to integrate into the framework of pathological causality the emotional life neglected by classical medicine. Psychosomatic doctrine has endeavored to go beyond the simultaneous achievements of Freudian psychology and Pavlov's reflexology.

It is to psychoanalysts that we owe the very first attempts to utilize directly in organic medicine the new dimensions which the psychology of the unconscious revealed. It was around 1920 that psychoanalysts attempted to apply to the mind pathological phenomena as they appeared in the experiments of the clinician of internal medicine—the idea of the role which the Freudian concept of emotional conflict plays in diagnosing illness. These very early attempts had no reverberations outside of the unconscious. Fifteen years later, with the help of Flanders, Dunbar and Franz Alexander, psychosomatic medicine found a satisfactory expression in the

corps of a developed and coherent doctrine.

The first psychoanalysts who became interested in psycho-organic interrelationships interpreted them as phenomena of conversion. We know that this term was used by Freud to explain how, in hysteria, an unacceptable, repressed impulse could be "converted" into symptoms charged with expressing emotional tensions that could find no other appropriate outlet. Sexual excitation, for example, which normally subsides after the sexual act, can find another way of expressing itself: hysterical convulsions reproducing the motions of the sexual act. If a fit of anger cannot be exteriorized freely by shouts, tears or blows, it may be expressed by paralysis of those organs that are usually used to express similar affections. These substitutive satisfactions are disappointing because they are never balanced by a satisfactory release.

Unlike the early psychoanalysts, Alexander does not believe that the hysteria of conversion can account for all the somatic and emotional intricacies. The somatic disturbances which attracted his attention and which he believes to be the basis of the disorders described by psychosomatic medicine are related to the internal organs enervated by the vege-

tative nervous system.

The notion of hysterical conversion was hardly applicable to the understanding of visceral disorders. Extreme hypertension or an intestinal hemorrhage could not be considered conversion phenomena because these are limited to the system of the life relationship alone. An hysterical person can reject coexistence and express this rejection by loss of voice: in this instance the symptom affects the sick person's relations with others.

The visceral organs, controlled by the autonomous nervous system, have no direct relation to conceptual processes. The psychic contents can

^{1.} Merleau-Ponty, La phénoménologie de la Perception (Paris, Gallimard, 1945).

be expressed symbolically in the domain of voluntary enervation. For example, joy is expressed by laughter. Blushing can be the expression of shame, although here we reach a limit, but it is highly improbable that the vaso-constriction of the vascular system in essential hypertension is responsible for the symbolic expression of ideas. The vegetative functions are stimulated or imbued with specific emotional tensions which may, if they reach a certain threshold of intensity, or become chronic, culminate in permanent disorders of the vegetative organs. This is what traditional medicine is familiar with and calls "functional disorders."

For a long time doctors have described gastric, intestinal and cardiac nervous affections. These disorders did not show, despite careful study, any anatomical or histological alteration that might explain the cause. This was a matter of a reversible disturbance of the functions of an apparatus whose coordination and operation were disturbed, and no one was able to uncover any morphological alterations. But chronic functional disturbances can, after a time, become irreversible and subject to lesions. The affective conflicts that are to be found at the source of the disturbance in gastric secretions, for example, can result in an ulceration of the stomach; just as hypertension, affected by inhibited emotional tensions which cannot find a liberating outlet through the neuro-muscular channels of life relationships, results in a hypertrophy of myocarditis and in irreversible pathological changes in the heart valves. *Essential* arterial hypertension, a functional disorder, in the long run results in the disorganization of the entire cardio-vascular system.

II

Let us attempt to describe the relation that exists between the affective conflicts of patients and the pathogenesis of gastric ulcers, as the Chicago school conceives of it.

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In most cases, ulcer patients have a characteristic psychology. They are persons of decision and energy who display a great independence and apparently find it difficult to accept the help and support of others. Close analysis of these attitudes proves them to be inexact and they can only be interpreted as reactions that protect the sick man from a deep desire for dependence and from his avowed yearning to be loved, helped and protected.

Other sick people, who accept their dependence and seek support from others, find their appeals ignored, not because of their inner defenses, but

because of unfavorable external circumstances. Patients affectively predisposed to ulceration of the gastric wall want to be loved and taken care of, but they can neither express nor accept this desire because of their unconscious guilt. Their desire to be loved is closely related with the desire to be fed—an association linked to the very early experiences of infancy; the mother's love is confused with the food and care that the baby received from her. Let us imagine, for one minute, what this all-powerful mother, the dispenser of food and care, must represent for the infant during the first days of his extra-uterine existence.

At the start of life nourishment represents a major and indelible emotional experience. For months the foetus lived in a perfect state of biophysiological equilibrium where there was no hiatus between need and satisfaction. It is truly the only moment in animal life when the sensation

of anxious and frustrating expectation does not exist.

The new-born child is going to experience, from the very moment of birth, a multitude of disagreeable and unfamiliar impressions: the first is hunger. The mother will satisfy his hunger and relieve his discomfort. At the very beginning the appeasement of hunger is associated with a sense of well-being and security and with this crucial image of emotional life: the mother. This is why, irrational as it may seem in our civilization, there exists a fundamental fear which is at the origin of the adult's insecurity: the fear of starvation. The certainty of knowing that his hunger will be satisfied is inseparable from the sense of security an infant feels in his relation to a tender mother who loves and protects him. The physical sensation of feeling satiated by a mother who gives abundant and regular nourishment is associated in a real emotional equation with the primitive sense of security.

A second emotional attitude associated early in life with hunger sensations is a sense of jealous possessiveness. In the infant, possession is confused

with the oral incorporation of sustenance.

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om but Any frustration of the child's oral needs tends to further an aggressive impulse against the frustrating object. Generally speaking, it is the important role played by the mother in the physiological and libidinal economy of the child that makes any aggression against her dangerous. This explains why the child's aggressive tendencies are guilt-ridden and filled with anxiety.

All these affective inter-reactions make the mechanism of nourishment complicated; its functioning is dependent upon a great many emotional disturbances. In particular, the aggressive nature of these tendencies en-

tails the risk of placing the child in conflict with his surroundings and, above all, with his mother.

Silbermann's experiment illustrates these ideas empirically: A fistula in the esophagus of a dog prevents food from reaching its stomach. The food repeatedly offered it greatly stimulates the secretion of its gastric juices which, working on an empty stomach, repeatedly produce an ulceration. People with ulcers resemble in certain respects Silbermann's dog. Their gastric juices also are constantly being stimulated, often at the wrong time, because of the dual action of hunger-love, established at an early stage.

The treatment of stomach ulcers, seen from the psychosomatic point of view, must necessarily be twofold in the light of all the factors at play. The essential role of psychotherapy is first of all preventive and should begin before the organic lesion is formed. But even the chronic condition of a gastric ulcer responds brilliantly and permanently to a combination of judicious medical treatment and psychotherapy. When a man with ulcers shows evidence of a typical neurotic structure and serious affective conflicts he should contemplate a classic psychoanalysis.

The following is an example taken from Alexander.³ An eighteen-yearold student had a hemorrhage due to an ulceration of the duodenum. Five years after this incident, when the sick man began psychotherapeutic treatment, there was evidence of all the clinical and radiological signs of an ulcer in full bloom. Moreover, he suffered from premature ejaculations.

The principal characteristic of the affectivity of this man was excessive control of emotions that he was loath to express for fear of giving the impression of weakness. He had been a calm and diligent child and enjoyed the companionship of his parents. On the other hand, he was dominated by a brother three years his senior who was aggressive and independent. When the patient was thirteen his brother died and shortly thereafter his father died. His mother, left alone with him, felt lost and tried to lean on him and to give him responsibilities that he was neither able nor prepared to assume. His indifference and the impression of calm security that he tried from then on to give, were merely a reaction and a defense against his own desires for passivity and dependence.

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In the course of treatment the patient became increasingly aware of the struggle that was going on within him to maintain the role he had assumed through fear of his own needs for tenderness and protection. A

^{2.} Proceedings of the Third Psychotherapy Council, Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis, 1946.

^{3.} Psychosomatic Medicine (New York, Norton, 1950).

dream that he had in the course of his treatment illustrates his profound affective situation.

He is on a bicycle with his mother. He has hold of the steering wheel. He loses control of it and they both fall. His mother is injured in the fall. His dream is a plain expression of the anxiety he feels in a role he is not equal to, that he is loath to assume and that might, in the end, prove to be dangerous.

His pathetic and repressed need to be protected and treated like a child finally found a liberating outlet in the emotional relationship that he established with his psychotherapist. Step by step he was able in this way to accept, first, his need for dependence, and then, progressively, to give it up and adopt a less infantile attitude. He was able to establish a satisfactory relationship with women; the minor disturbances of sexual potency disappeared and his gastric disturbances improved at the same time.

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We will now describe the psychology of excremental functions and the part that the archaic association established between the processes of fecal elimination and certain traits of character play in the pathogenesis of intestinal disorders. It was Freud who opened the way to the genetic understanding of this association, which seems, at first, a strange one.

Excremental functions play a large part in the life and affective evolution of the little child. Fecal matter seems to him an essential part of himself, his first possession. For the first time in a life of tyrannical dependence, something, at last, depends upon him and his own will; something, moreover, that his entourage, and his mother particularly, tends to overvalue. For the first time-and the child will never forget this revelation-he is master of a precious thing that belongs to him, that he can give or refuse in order to punish or gratify those around him. Very early a feeling of independence, and tendencies, either appearing—to give, or aggressive—to refuse or to soil, are associated with excremental functions. In the affectivity of the child, the excremental function remains associated with the idea of a possession whose preciousness is evidenced by the attitude of his entourage. The child has learned that he can exchange his fecal matter, as one exchanges anything of value, for other goods: a caress, a compliment and even sweets. In this way a relationship is established at an early age between excrement and the idea of money, on the one hand, and a feeling of independence, the psychological satisfaction of the achievement of a valued act,

on the other. All these ideas are indispensable to an understanding of the psychogenic disorders of excremental functions. To clarify them, let us take an example from Portis.⁴

A young woman, recently married, suffered from an ulcerated colon, with sanguineous diarrhea. She responded to medical treatment but three months later the diarrhea returned. When she was asked about the events that preceded this sudden relapse, the patient could remember nothing that might explain it. She finally said, although she attached no importance to it, that her husband had asked her a few moments before, jokingly, if she thought she could reimburse him for the sum he had lent her for her wedding trousseau. The patient did not have the money, but she attempted to repay her debt in accordance with an archaic mechanism of exchange. When the doctor was able to explain to the patient this chain of reactions she was cured without any medication.

In cases of chronic constipation psychogenic elements are characteristic and never lacking. These patients suffer from a sense of being abandoned and the fear of not being understood by the people around them. Their constipation reflects both the need for a possession, which compensates for the sense of loss and neglect of the loved object, and satisfaction of the aggressive impulse, the response to the general feeling of rejection they suffer from.

Here is an example: a young woman, married for a short time, suffered from chronic constipation that no medical or dietary treatment could alleviate. Psychotherapy revealed the hopes the patient associated with marriage, the expectation of love and tenderness. These hopes were vain. The patient's husband had no idea of the intensity of his wife's need for affection and never thought that she might suffer from his coolness to her. The patient, on the other hand, believed that her marriage was a happy one and was unaware of the hostility that she felt toward her husband. Specifically, the patient never permitted herself to express the slightest criticism of her husband. She would say, in a playful tone of voice and without any apparent seriousness, that her husband never gave her the slightest gift, not even a flower. The doctor had an interview with the husband and helped him to understand the role that his attitude played in his wife's troubles; he urged him to be more demonstrative and generous.

The following day the patient said that, for the first time in two years, she had a spontaneous bowl movement. Incidentally, she mentioned that

^{4.} Portis, "Newer Concepts of the Etiology and Management of Idiopathic Ulcerative Colitis," Journal of the American Medical Association, 139; 208.

for the first time since their marriage her husband brought her a bouquet of flowers.

The patient's constipation was a regressive means of asserting the value of what she possessed and of responding, by a kind of functional miserliness, to the affective frustrations inflicted upon her by her husband.

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We shall now attempt to explain how the interrelation of emotional phenomena and physiological manifestations which we have just examined can be comprehended.

In the current writings of the theorists of psychosomatic medicine we read that between psychological phenomena on the one hand, and physiological manifestations on the other, either an "explanation" exists, or the two can be shown to be "concomitant." We have not taken sufficiently into account the fact that, in using this naïve kind of imagery, we suddenly introduce the quarrels and the difficulties of this dualism. Both the emotional phenomena and the physiological processes express, in their own original terms, the same occurrence.

It was Alexander who found the best solution to this problem. Unfortunately, he expressed his ideas in a few hasty and obscure pages.⁵ According to him, there are three primary tendencies, or three energetic vectors: incorporation, elimination, and retention.

The primitive and essential needs of the child: to receive nourishment and love; to eliminate feces and to express hostility; to retain feces and to manifest independence or aggression—these represent, simultaneously, tendencies and functions. From these archaic levels one can better understand the primitive synchronism of tendencies and functions that are as yet undifferentiated and that can be likened to the fons et origo and to the original womb of the specific affective and functional temperament of a given individual.

In the beginning, this is a matter of the biological and dynamic processes whose dual aspect, physiological and psychological, coincides. The desire to receive and the tendency to retain or to expel which is plain in certain types of temperament which psychoanalysis has isolated, are observable again in the physiological manifestations of gastric hypersecretion: constipation and diarrhea.

^{5.} F. Alexander, "Analyse vectorielle du processus vital," Principes de Psychanalyse (Paris, Payot, 1952).

The impulsive activity of the baby is organically connected with his essential functions. The infant's most primitive needs, either physiological, to suck, or affective, to be loved, protected and cared for, are intermingled. What we know today about the infant's development during the first months of his existence buttresses the concept of a primary root such as tendencies and functions.

Thanks to studies made by Margaret Ribble, 6 we are in possession of a penetrating analysis of the infant's everyday circumstances and of his basic needs. The gesture of severing the umbilical cord is not sufficient to give him true autonomy. Man alone, of all the animals, is born into the world incomplete.

Portmann has concluded studies on comparative morphology which demonstrate that the new-born infant acquires the traits of an anthropoid only after the first year of life. It is this characteristic of neuro-physiological prematurity which makes him a dependent and unfinished being who has come into the world too soon.

During the post-natal period, the mother's role is such that one can maintain that between the intra-uterine existence of the infant and his first months of life there is a bond of organic continuity. This is a purely symbiotic relation which the infant is constrained to maintain with his mother. The latter is not only the source of indispensable nourishment: her role is more complex and more meaningful. The mother's care, her love, her caresses, even her cradling of the child and her words, allow him to mature and help him to acquire mastery of the functions that he first attempts. The mother is a veritable bio-affective extension of the infant.

Miss Ribble has shown that the new-born child has acute and massive need of oxygen. "The relative amount of anoxemia in the birth of man entails an element of uncertainty that has no equivalent in the animal kingdom," she writes. Suction, the care given to his body, the tenderness and security that the infant finds in his mother's love, stimulate his respiratory functions and overcome the first difficulties of hematosis.

Thus, emotional development and functional maturation depend upon the infant's very first affective experiences in his relations with his mother. One can never overstress the role of *structuration* played by the mother in her baby's development. The libidinal gratifications which the mother gives directly to the infant further his functional maturation. Much de-

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^{6.} Margaret Ribble, The Right of Infancy (New York, Columbia University Press, 1943)

^{7.} Quoted by Racamier, "Etudes cliniques des frustrations précoces," Revue Française de Psychanalyse, No. 3, 1953.

pends upon this early phase. The apprenticeship of basic functions ranks with the development of permanent traits of character and with the personality's specific psychological reactions.

In the last analysis, a phenomenon is not the simple representation of two corresponding and parallel series of occurrences, merely at a different level. Rather, each series relates to an original language, and expresses on a blank page the same affects. The specific structure of the soma permits of only one perception in somatic terms, regardless of the nature of the stimuli involved.

The somatic interpretation of fear, for example, merely interprets our incorrigible anthropomorphism. It is the limitations of our imaginative faculties that force us to such mechanistic imagery. At the level upon which the processes take place, trembling, weakness of the knees, diarrhea and perspiration are fear, experienced in accordance with the only modality accessible to the soma.

Man will be seen to be a functional unity, an individual totality—body and affectivity—rather than parts added to other parts, indifferent one to the other and unrelated to the personality that animates and connects them.

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We shall now attempt to give an account of the Russian version of psychosomatic medicine, termed *cortico-visceral pathology*, which offers an original interpretation of the problems we have just studied.

The Russian school has been inspired principally by Pavlov's researches; it is concerned with a physiological conception of phenomena of which the study of conditioned reflexes is the basis. Let us recall briefly the essential physiological notions that serve to explain these mechanisms.

The dog who salivates when he is shown a piece of meat obeys an absolute, innate, unconditioned reflex; if, at the same time that he is shown this meat, some sensory stimulus is presented—a prescribed sound, for example—after a certain number of experiments the sensory stimulus alone, without the association of the food, excites salivary secretion. In the cerebral cortex a new and temporary connection has been established between the stimulus and the organic response, a new type of reflex: the conditioned reflex.

The possibilities of conditioning in life are infinite, and we are beginning to see evidence of the extreme richness of these temporary connections, if any kind of excitation elicits any kind of response. As a consequence of the infinite number of excitations that it constantly receives,

the cortex finds itself in a functional state which is constantly remanipulated by the phenomenon of excitation and inhibition. "The cortex represents a grandiose mosaic of points of excitation and of intricate inhibition, variable in quality and in intensity."

Among the stimuli that arrive from the external world, language, which is *one of the first of these*, is integrated into the ensemble of mechanisms, and forms the second system of stimulation proper to man.

All corporeal functions seem to depend upon the cortex.

Let us attempt to analyze the contribution embodied in the great concept of conditioning. Although the absolute reflex is a partial one, elementary and stereotyped, a phenomenon which can bring into play only the inferior levels of the nervous system, the cortex, and consequently the entire organism, participate in the conditioned reflex. On the other hand, in the unconditioned reflex, the initial excitement will produce a movement of retreat; the sight of food starts up the digestive processes. Nothing like this is true of the conditioned reflex in which the stimulus and the response, through the play of intermediary structures, no longer have the same reciprocal relationship: sound may start either digestive or circulatory phenomena, etc. One might say, incidentally, that an innate reflex is almost an abstraction. This term, however, can only refer to the first experiment of a series; thereafter, the subject is always conditioned to a certain extent. We therefore believe that conditioning is a kind of setting to which all the relations of an individual to his environment, all his social activities, can be traced back. The affective life of the individual will be the source of analogous phenomena. His entire history can be written in terms of conditioning.

Let us now attempt to describe the mechanism of corticovisceral pathology as it is understood by the Russians. A quotation from Pavlov summarizes the essentials: "It may seem as if many functions take place completely uninfluenced by cerebral hemispheres, but in reality it does not happen this way. This higher level controls everything that happens in the body."9

The cerebral cortex acts upon the viscera by different mechanisms. It can either release innate functions by a mechanism of "starting them off," or modify functions by a mechanism of "correction." This is a fundamental fact but it is only one of the elements of a setting far more complex, be-

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^{8.} Pavlov, "Le Reflexe conditionné," Grande Encyclopédie.

^{9.} Quoted from Pchonik, Le Cortex cérébral et les Fonctions réceptrices de l'organisme (Moscow, 1952), p. 7.

cause, outside of this action of the cortex upon the viscera, the modern Russian school has been able to give evidence of another action that operates in an inverse way: that of the viscera upon the cortex. This is an original contribution and one of very great import. Pavlov and his school described exteroceptive conditioned reflexes, that is to say, reflexes produced by the stimulation of the sensory organs. Bikow and his students showed that it was possible to produce interoceptive conditioned reflexes through excitation of the sensory organs of the viscera, the interoceptors. In these phenomena could be seen a biological interpretation of the notion of the unconscious.

Besides cortico-visceral and viscero-cortical actions, the existence of systems of viscero-visceral-direct actions, without the intervention of the higher nervous centers, has been demonstrated.

All these mechanisms are subject to constant and intimate interactions which contribute to the formation of a functional state of equilibrium at the level of the cortex, variable at all times and dependent upon stimuli occurring within or without the body. It is this equilibrium that determines, at all times, the reactions of each organ and of the entire organism.

Certain cortical conditions can produce a disorder in the function of the viscera; repeated disorders of this kind can, in the long run, lead to changes in the structure, to lesions.

The effect of the diseased organ upon the cortex is different from that of the healthy organ and, in the pathological sense, contributes to the changes in cortical equilibrium.

The treatment recommended by the Soviet school is the logical consequence of its physiological concepts. The weary and diseased organ is put to rest and protected from harmful stimulation. This is done either by placing the disturbing cortex out of circulation, or by isolating the diseased organ from all the others. For example, the purpose of using sleep as therapy is to obtain a cortical separation and thus a change in the pathogenic conditioning. The use of novocain also isolates the organ by suppressing higher nervous afferents.

It is our opinion that the Russians' interest in describing purely physiological mechanisms and their deliberate refusal to probe the deepest main-springs of physiology and of emotional experience make their theories, so rich in many ways, inadequate.

VI

Having sketched the major principles of the psychosomatic school and illustrated with a few case histories the clinical approach, we must now

ask, what does this amount to? It is, in fact, a reversal of the concepts that medical thought applied to the understanding of illness during the greater part of the last century and the first decades of this one.

The psychosomatic school has sought to effect the conceptual revolution, which consists in putting organic factors and emotional phenomena on the same plane and in introducing them *simultaneously* into the determinism

of pathology.

Medical thought has been opposed to a true study of emotional factors seen from the standpoint of a contingent epiphenomenalism which needlessly obscures the clinical picture. The intrusion of the emotional world, incomprehensible and anarchical, conforming to none of the rules hitherto recognized, was considered a threat to the beautiful order of a clear and logical science. It has been said that this was nothing new and that, after all, psychosomatic medicine is part of the Hippocratic heritage. This affirmation is no more exact than the one that consists in maintaining that our atomic physics was already inscribed in Democritus' atomism or in

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Medical thought remained impregnated with the mechanistic materialism that dominated the entire scientific current of the nineteenth century; the doctor considered himself the body's engineer. He was inclined to associate the body with a machine whose wheels he took apart, seeking flaws or weaknesses and offering technical solutions; paying attention to the parts, which he thought of as separate, never seeing the sick man as the totality he really is. The doctor wanted and created his world simple and logical, and he moved in it with ease. His failure to understand at any given moment was ascribed to a lack of diagnostic talent or of information or knowledge, never to his complete failure to comprehend something essential. The mystery of illness seemed to him like the stammerings of a young science; he never doubted the totally intelligible nature of the phenomena he studied. The final truth about illness he thought of as veiled by an ignorance he hoped to penetrate; there existed beneath phenomena a reality that must be uncovered progressively—this was part of the certainty of his faith, the kind of spirit that is ready to meet a challenge. The doctor felt himself on safe ground so long as he dealt with organs and lesions that he could evaluate in a familiar world. He was filled with a strange discomfort when asked to venture into this moving world of which he knew so little, which he was not prepared to deal with, and whose laws escaped him. The revolution that psychosomatic concepts effected in medical thought was enough to thoroughly upset the doctor accustomed to thinking in the manner of the prevailing mechanistic outlook.

All the great clinicians of the last century admitted that the emotional life of the patient was an element in the pathological picture, but they acknowledged it as one would a poor relation who must be made to know his place: in an obscure corner of the chain that goes from causes to effects. When it was announced that the patient's affective life might play a major role in the ensemble of factors that resulted in a given pathological condition, the assertion seemed not only excessive but apparently marked a real setback for medical science. For the doctor accustomed to dealing with substantial concepts, this new trend seemed to be the negation of his best efforts to found a medical science, to pull it out of the old rut of magical cures into which, for such a long time, it had been buried. To leave the solid substructure of verifiable and measurable facts for a conjectural and uncertain method of approach seemed to him the beginning of an adventure filled with perils for a young science, which envisaged for itself a future similar to that of the physico-chemical sciences rather than an inconceivable return to the interpretation of dreams.

Until the eighteenth century, when Morgagni's treatise on anatomical pathology appeared, medicine remained an almost subjective art, in which examination of the patient had little or no place. With the appearance of pathological anatomy, the road that led to revolution was opened by Laënnec, and the primary task of a physical examination was to discover and foresee the troublesome lesion as well as to demonstrate its existence from the anatomical point of view. Techniques improved and multiplied. They became more and more meaningful to the doctor, who derived from them a growing sense of efficacy and understanding. But, by that strange paradox that makes every step forward become an obstacle when it reaches its maximum potential, techniques, unquestionably a contribution to progress, finally blind the doctor, who sees the disease more and more and the patient less and less: the trees have finally hidden the forest.

A vast expanse lies between notations the doctor will make on his complicated charts and laboratory tests that have been deemed necessary, on the one hand, and what the patient experiences and expresses, on the other hand; between the patient who suffers, burning with his own fever, and the degree that is registered by the thermometer; between, in short, the illness as experienced by the patient and the illness as diagnosed by the doctor. This difference marks the profound misunderstanding that has occurred between the doctor who sees himself, rightfully, of course, as

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the practitioner of a strict science, and the patient who is obliged to entrust a part of his body, a little more diseased each day, to a greater and greater number of highly specialized physicians. It is this alarming impoverishment of the over-all perspective that doctors maintain in regard to the study of illness that causes concern about the technical progress of medicine.

Up to the present, the entire revolution of medicine has been confined to the domain of specialization. Specialization has proceeded from the organism to the organ, from the whole to the part-to the smallest part, about which we know more and more. Medical knowledge goes from the general to the particular and progressively loses a picture of the whole as it seeks to consecrate itself to an extensive analysis of organs, of parts of organs. The heart, the lungs, the skin and the kidneys have been explored with minute attention and admirable care; but man, who possesses these organs—his subjective needs and his efforts to adapt himself to his environment, how these internal conflicts and these external problems can be reconciled in order to keep all the parts of the machine in balance—in short, man, as a structure, has been neglected. The architecture of his tissues, the chemistry of his secretions, the calculated elements of his temperament, have been studied and are known; his deepest needs, what he is, his most intimate aspirations, apparently have been considered superfluous information. Illness is not only the microbe or the lesion; it is also a daily emotional tension, fear, hatred, desire, frustrations and competition, all the feelings that every individual experiences every day in his relations with others. It is useless for medical science to employ the physico-chemical sciences as a model, first of all because of the unique nature of the patient. The engineer can solve his problems by inductive reasoning, but this method is not valid when applied to man. The doctor's disappointment in his failure to solve medical problems by grasping the meaning of the phenomena of general laws is natural. Since Aristotle, we know that no science save general science exists. The introduction to the data of an already difficult problem of this frightening unknown—emotional life-which doctors were not able to grasp and utilize, gave rise to deep dismay in medical thinking. The role of affective conflicts and their influence cannot be dealt with by using the traditional methods of medical science. These subtle, emotional, and complex relations can be examined only by employing methods that are suitable and that are related to psychology.

Thanks to Freud's remarkable intuition we have today an irreplaceable technique for understanding and treating emotional disorders. When the

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notion of *unconscious motivation* was introduced into psychology a decisive step was taken toward the development of a medical understanding of the person as an intelligible structure. The emotional element is no longer described as a non-specific oddity in the ensemble of an established pathological condition—a negative way of defining illness—but as an essential part of a positive diagnosis, based upon exact investigation, certain of its technique and of its doctrinal foundation. The distrust of the psychosomatic school which certain medical milieus evidenced should not obscure the favorable attitude it evoked elsewhere.

The psychosomatic approach to the medical problem, seen from a unitary point of view, responds to a kind of organic necessity for the development of medical science and is a happy addition to the general trend of ideas that tends to prevail today. The great currents of ideas that mark the beginning of this century seek to emphasize the ensemble and to draw away from analyses that strive to understand what is complex by merely adding elements together. This is why, for example, the dogma of cellular pathology, advanced by Virchow, had to be abandoned. Cellular disorders could not themselves be understood without referring to the disturbance of a structure. For cellular pathology, Leriche substitutes the pathology of tissue.

All of the pathology of adaptation described by Selye was developed in opposition to the atomistic analyses of the end of the nineteenth century. Pathological phenomena are considered the over-all answer of the organism to outside aggression. Psychoanalysis was to add the notion of intrapsychic conflict, which can also be described as internal stress.

The Soviet school, in emphasizing the over-all nature of illness, links up with the modern concept of the primacy of structures. The emphasis that this school places on the dynamic nature of cortical processes brings it close, in this domain, to the descriptions of Freudian psychology.

Pavlov's physiology shows evidence of the possibility of supple and conditioned cortical modifications in response to an infinite variety of stimuli, explaining the differentiated adaptations by changes of milieus. The cortex is the seat of constant functional transformations in keeping with the collision between the nervous rhythms of inhibition and excitation. Psychoanalysis, describing differentiated intrapsychic elements (ego, super ego, elementary unconscious) that can enter into conflict, confirms and reinforces the fundamental notion of affective dynamics.

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In psychology, the Gestalt school introduces an original and fecund picture of the problems of perception. In opposition to the theories of

Condillac, who attempted to recompose structures on the basis of elementary mental facts, the psychology of form affirms the primacy of structures which outline a given pattern that is not reducible to the elements which compose it. Everywhere one reads about the tendency to describe ensembles, to give prominence to structures. Man is no longer envisaged either in terms of nature or in terms of culture, i.e., body or mind, but the two apparently antithetic terms are taken up in a dialectical movement which transcends them and merges them in order to reveal their intimate and common essence.

To the notion of structure, so vigorously stressed by many different researches, there has recently been joined the idea of the role played by the history of the patient. Undoubtedly, the doctor had always acquainted himself with the history of the disease. But the information he obtained was never really used to achieve a dynamic understanding of the malady in question. Moreover, what information he did have was superficial and limited to the pathological past. The emotional past was quite as much ignored as the present. The view taken of the patient's past remained objective and, as it were, external to the totality of his emotional experiences.

Psychosomatic medicine teaches the doctor to listen to the patient and to ascribe an intelligible dynamic meaning to the events of his emotional life. The history of the sick person eventually acquires a significance which can be deciphered and employed. The entire past sheds light on the pathological present. Between the past and the present, there exists a tie, and it is this connection which psychosomatic medicine has endeavored to reestablish. The pathological present, embodied in a structure which forms part of an organic whole, is itself the culmination of the total history of the individual. Thus the structure, seen as something spatial, and the history as movement in time, join and condition each other in the structuralhistorical continuum of the total pathological phenomenon.

This notion of historicity, which psychosomatic medicine places in relief and which it makes one of the keys to an understanding of disease, can be found in what is sometimes called philosophical anthropology. There too an effort is made to see man in his concrete reality, uniting mind and matter, in his living and continuous relations with himself and with

others.

All of the currents of this era—in the arts and in ideas—converge upon this major question mark: man. It is from the standpoint of rediscovered humanism, which concerns itself with the ever shrinking place that man

occupies in medical thought, that one can locate the psychosomatic

approach.

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red nan The psychosomatic school is, to be sure, a valid reaction against the stubborn organicism which for so long dominated medical thought. This current, prodigiously enriching, must, however, remain balanced and close to clinical realities. Although emotional factors play a considerable and probably preponderant role in all functional disturbances, although they represent an essential modality in the pathogenesis of a good many organic disturbances, it is nonetheless true that recognition of them will be of greater service to a new and more fertile approach to disease if one is careful not to advance the claim—which would be, so to speak, the inverse of the error so justly denounced by psychosomatic medicine—that they are the deus ex machina of pathology.

Traditional medical thought, reflective and prudent, is alarmed by the daring of a step which strikes it as being, in certain of its formulations, a challenge to common sense. Let us say, then, paraphrasing Claudel, that "common sense is not always unerring," and let us recall that for Valéry, common sense is that faculty of the mind which for so long has enabled mankind to deny the existence of antipodes. According to Descartes, an exertion of will is necessary to believe that two and two make four. It is incumbent on medical thought to make a great effort to integrate the new trend into its development and to reconsider the problem of the sick man

from a new point of view.

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TWO PHILOSOPHICAL INTERPRETATIONS OF NATURAL LAW'

For more than two generations what has come to be known as the "revival of natural law" has been in progress in Europe. Duguit and Hauriou, Geny and del Vecchio, Stammler and Krabbe, and Kohler, to mention only some of the earlier writers, have turned back to elements of the natural law tradition as a way out of the difficulties which positivism created. Most of this work has been done by jurists while philosophers have been concerned with quite different issues, although there are some notable exceptions, like Leonard Nelson, whose philosophical theory of right has been unduly neglected. It is much more recently, however, that thinking in terms of natural law has made substantial headway in English-speaking countries, the language itself having presented an obstacle. The English language does not differentiate between law and right in the same manner as the Continental European languages, each of which has a pair of concepts, such as droit and loi, diritto and legge, Recht and Gesetz, which correspond to the Latin jus and lex. Thus, droit, diritto and Recht have the pri-

I. Leo Strauss, Natural Right and History (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1953), and John Wild, Plato's Modern Enemies and the Theory of Natural Law (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1953). References to these two works are given in the text, indicating the page.

mary meaning of designating the entire body of legal rules comprising a legal system, which in English is one of the meanings of the word "law"; whereas "right" in English is primarily assigned the meaning of what in Continental jurisprudence is referred to as a "subjective right." A further consequence of this divergence is that the term "law" lacks that precision of reference to a specific general rule which loi and the corresponding terms possess. Thus while there can be little doubt that a loi naturelle (Naturgesetz) refers to a regularity in nature, such as the law of gravitation, the term "law of nature" in English may also refer to the droit naturel. It is essential to bear this semantic divergence in mind when considering two recent works of a philosophical nature which are concerned with natural law in the juristic and sociologico-political sense. Both books are the work of philosophers and they reflect the difficulty just alluded to by using, the one "law" and the other "right," for essentially the same entity. Nor is it accidental that Strauss, who came from Germany to the United States in the 1930's, should use "right" and "law." Both terms are needed, actually, for rendering the complex of ideas covered by droit or Recht.²

Wild focuses his attention upon those issues which have been highlighted by a group of writers in England and America who in recent years have been attacking Plato (and Aristotle as well!) as "totalitarian." He refers specifically to Warner Fite, The Platonic Legend (New York, Scribner's, 1934), R. H. S. Grossman, Plato Today (1937), A. D. Winspear, The Genesis of Plato's Thought (New York, Dryden Press, 1940) and K. R. Popper, The Open Society and Its Enemies (London, Routledge, 1945), Vol. I. He notes that there are many more articles and reviews in "technical journals" taking similar lines. Wild approves of the fact that these writers consider moral philosophy an "essential strand" of Plato's thought, and that they attempt "to relate his doctrines to the problems now confronting us." But he objects that they, being individualistic, utilitarian, Marxist and positivistic, should feel that since Plato is none of these things, is indeed philosophically opposed to them, he is also politically opposed. "They all agree that Plato, if he were alive today, would take his stand with totalitarianism and dictatorship against the forces of 'liberalism,' 'progress,' and 'democracy.'" And this in spite of the fact that Plato is "bitterly opposed to tyranny." (Implied here is the idea that totalitarianism is identical with tyranny—a more than questionable as-

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^{2.} Thus I found it desirable in rendering Hegel's Philosophie des Rechts into English to speak of it as a "Philosophy of Right and Law." Cf. my The Philosophy of Hegel (1953) for further clarification of this difficult issue.

sumption.) No doubt Wild is right in rejecting the notion that Plato is a "totalitarian." To him "the manifest rationalism of Plato's moral philosophy and his hatred of tyranny under any form . . . would seem to make these charges somewhat questionable." But cannot the same be said of Marx? Is there not always a considerable gulf between the ideas and their realization, as any reader of the Great Inquisitor should know? The argument, even if sound, is not sufficient. Wild undertakes to extend it by exploring the related issue of natural law, that is to say, of innate, ethical "tendencies." But before exploring its elaboration, it may be well to consider the position of Leo Strauss.

The disquisition of Leo Strauss is essentially directed against "historicism." This is not exactly a new argument, for since Troeltsch and Max Weber wrote—to the latter Strauss devotes some forty pages of trenchant analysis—there has been an increasing volume of criticism, not only among philosophers, but even more among historians and sociologists. Usually, however, the argument runs in terms of contrasting the Western rationalism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with the "German" historicism of the nineteenth and twentieth. Strauss, on the other hand, would seek the roots of the troubles of our day as much in this rationalism as in the historicism which followed it. Modern natural right doctrines are to him a perversion of the classic natural right as we find it in Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero, and it is this perversion which is at the center of our troubles.

Strauss argues with subtlety and learning, but his train of reasoning at times becomes turgid; this is in part due to the author's habit of not sharply indicating whether he himself or the author he is discussing is speaking. He also proceeds with sovereign contempt for almost all previous work, to which he refers only obliquely, without giving references, so that it is anyone's guess whom he has in mind. Finally, he has a habit of giving anywhere from three to a dozen references in one footnote to, e.g., the writings of Aristotle intended to substantiate a statement in the text, without indicating which one of these references is meant to bear the burden of proof. Since the several references often carry divergent implications, guesswork must decide which ones to consider; when this involves several authors such a method of reference borders on the absurd. One wonders what the purpose is: surely Strauss does not need to convince the reader that he has read these works in extenso? This, taken together with his failure to refer to and evaluate the work of others who have preceded him in the field, seems rather regrettable in a study of such value.

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Strauss goes back beyond the writings of Plato and Aristotle, however, to discover "The Origin of the Idea of Natural Right" (Chapter III). He stresses the fact that "the idea of natural right must be unknown as long as the idea of nature is unknown" (p. 81). To this must be added, of course. the further observation, not clearly faced, that any idea of natural law or right must change with changing conceptions of nature. But such a historical approach to the idea of natural law would run afoul of Strauss' major purpose which is to establish an immutable natural law. "The philosophic quest for the first things presupposes not merely that there are first things but that the first things are always and that things which are always or are imperishable are more truly beings than the things which are not always." This presumably is Strauss' view and it constitutes the underlying major premise of much that follows. It is linked to his key proposition that "it can be said that the discovery of nature is identical with the actualization of a human possibility which, at least according to its own interpretation, is trans-historical, trans-social, trans-moral, and transreligious" (p. 89). It is in reference to these terms that Strauss sees the fundamental distinction arising between "natures" and "conventions." "The distinction between nature and convention, between physis and nomos, is therefore coeval with the discovery of nature and hence with philosophy" (p. 90). Philosophy, arising as it does in conjunction with the discovery of "nature," affects man's attitude toward political matters in general and toward laws in particular. It challenges the authority of the ancestral tradition, and recognizes instead "that nature is the authority," or rather, "the standard" (p. 92). But Strauss almost immediately corrects himself, for he would contrast reason and authority. He puts forward the very common but highly questionable proposition that "obedience without reasoning why" corresponds to "authority proper" and adds the extravagant proposition that "philosophy stands and falls by the distinction between reason and authority." It would seem to me to be much more nearly true to say that philosophy stands and falls with its capacity to replace authority without reason by authority with reason! Thus the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas is precisely characterized, whereas the proposition put forward by Strauss would eliminate Aquinas from the rank of philosophers. (It is perhaps no accident that Strauss makes only passing, though highly appreciative, mention of Thomistic doctrine; he wonders, however, "whether the natural law as Thomas Aquinas understands it is natural law strictly speaking, i.e., a law knowable to the unassisted human mind." Thomas Aquinas' own unequivocal statements on

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the subject do not permit one to have such doubts.) This misunderstanding of authority is of crucial importance. As will become apparent later, it undermines his argument concerning Locke and the moderns.

Strauss then proceeds to give an extended analysis of "conventionalism." He details the familiar line of reasoning of the Sophists more or less in Platonic terms, but shows that "the nerve of the conventionalist argument is this: right is conventional because right belongs essentially to the city and the city is conventional" (p. 108).3 He further argues that "conventionalism presupposes that all men understand by justice fundamentally the same thing: to be just means not to hurt others, or it means to help others, or to be concerned with the common good." But the necessary specifications required to make each of these terms applicable to concrete situations are conventional. After an interesting excursion into the related thought of the Epicureans and more especially Lucretius, 4 Strauss turns to the Socratic-Platonic doctrine of natural right which he considers the "classic natural right" (Chapter IV). To the extent that Socrates can be said to be the founder of political philosophy, he is also "the originator of the whole tradition of natural right teachings" (p. 120). In the light of a conventional review of Socrates' teachings, in which the criticism of hedonism finds its appropriate central place, Strauss stresses that "wants" rather than "pleasures" are the primary factors of human nature. "The order of the wants of a being points back to the natural constitution, to the What, of the being concerned; it is that constitution which determines the order, the hierarchy of the various wants . . ." (p. 127). "It is the hierarchic order of man's natural constitution which supplies the basis for natural right as the classics understood it." Hence "the good life simply is the life in which the requirements of man's natural inclinations are fulfilled in the proper order to the highest possible degree. . . . " In résumé, "the good life is the perfection of man's nature." The natural law then consists in "the rules circumscribing the general character of the good life" (ibid.). This is the life according to nature.

It follows from this line of reasoning that "restraint is as natural to man as is freedom." But such restraint and such freedom result from the actual living together of men in limited societies, the *poleis* of ancient Greece

^{3.} This proposition would be clearer if the term "law" rather than "right" were used. For "right," in the common English connotation, does not "essentially belong to the city" whereas law might.

^{4.} This excursion culminates in the proposition that "the good life, according to nature, is the retired life of the philosopher who lives at the fringes of civil society. The life devoted to civil society and to the service of others is not the life according to nature" (p. 113).

providing an ideal example. "Political freedom is not a gift of heaven; it becomes actual only through the efforts of many generations" (p.131). Hence the chance of such freedom being universalized is small indeed. Only where forcible restraint is meaningfully related to the hierarchy of wants can happiness be achieved, since "the core of happiness consists in human excellence." Such a doctrine clearly implies a rejection of egalitarianism. "Equal rights for all appeared to the classics as the most unjust" (p. 135). This holds as true for Cicero as it does for Plato and Aristotle.5 Hence, any regime (politeia) is essentially an ordering of human beings; it is trans-legal, the factual distribution of power within the community. "No law, and hence no constitution, can be the fundamental political fact, because all laws depend on human beings," Strauss writes in paraphrasing his understanding of the classic "natural right" doctrine. It here becomes clear why he recoiled from speaking of natural law; law is a secondary phenomenon in his view and in his interpretation of the classic view. But he fails to meet the powerful arguments to the contrary that have been brought forward by many students of the legal philosophy of the ancients. His assertion that the classics in dealing with different regimes "implied that the paramount social phenomenon . . . is the regime" as just defined in terms of an actual distribution of power is more than doubtful. And it is not made more probable by his bold assertion that "we are in the habit of speaking of 'civilization,' where the classics spoke of 'regimes.' " For the politeias of Plato and Aristotle, their cyclical succession and their intrinsic value, are incomprehensible except in terms of an antecedent conception of law and justice in terms of which the classification proceeds.

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Having said this, I hasten to add that Strauss' insistence upon the feasibility of the best regime is entirely justified; it may be extremely difficult to realize and highly improbable, but it is realizable "under the most favorable conditions." Should these conditions not exist, the best regime would cease to be feasible; it would also cease to be "legitimate." For the legitimacy of a regime is related to its adequacy; only if a regime fits the conditions is it just. "A very imperfect regime may supply the only just solution to the problem of a given community; but since such a regime cannot be effectively directed toward man's full perfection, it can never be noble." For "everything noble is just, but not everything just is noble." The purist interpretation of Strauss is highlighted in this superimposition

^{5.} Strauss' rejection of the view of the Carliles and of Sabine (not cited!) that Cicero is an egalitarian and hence closer to Kant than to Plato and Aristotle is decidedly sound and supported by the numerous references he offers.

of the noble above the just as a higher value. This seems to me a basic misreading of both Plato and Aristotle. Strauss himself qualifies it by introducing the idea of consent. "The political problem consists in reconciling the requirement for wisdom with the requirement for consent" (p. 141). Only in classic natural right, wisdom takes precedence over consent (as contrasted with the modern egalitatian natural right).

In an allegedly general summary formula, Strauss asserts that "the simply best regime would be the absolute rule of the wise; the practically best regime is the rule, under law, of gentlemen, or the mixed regime" (p. 143). But this statement is true for Plato neither when he wrote the Republic nor when he wrote The Laws (though more nearly so), while Aristotle would reject the first part of the statement. The statement also contradicts what Strauss said earlier about the nature of the politeia (regime), namely, that it is more fundamental than any laws. For how can it be at the same time more fundamental than and under the law?

In short, Strauss' approach to "Socratic-Platonic-Stoic natural right teaching" starts from a basic contradiction. In trying to develop a corresponding notion of justice, Strauss gets bogged down in further contradictions. Various types of justice are discussed, the "citizen-morality," and the justice oriented toward the ultimate end of man which is knowledge of the eternal truth, so that justice becomes identical with "the conditions of the philosophic life" (p. 151). But the Ciceronian notions are still different, and in Aristotle finally, according to Strauss, natural right becomes "concrete decisions." We also are told that justice resides in concrete decisions rather than general rules. But is it the same thing to "become" something and to "reside" in it? Finally, as Strauss notes, Aristotle suggests that natural right is "changeable." To resolve the problem posited by this proposition, Strauss reverts back to a notion that "the just is the common good." But what is "the common good"?6

Wild is in substantial agreement with the main line of Strauss' reasoning. For him, too, Plato and Aristotle are the founders of the true doctrine of natural law. But Wild's approach to the problem is reinforced (from his point of view) by the metaphysics of realism. This doctrine is expounded in the third part of his study which is devoted to elucidating realism in rela-

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^{6.} There are some shrewd remarks interlarded here about the "extreme situation," pp. 160 ff., which offer Strauss an opportunity to draw a distinction between Aristotle and Machiavelli, who denies natural right because inter alia "he seems to derive no small enjoyment from contemplating these deviations" from the right. But these observations are scarcely adequate, considering Strauss' major concern with historicism which harks back to Machiavelli and Thucydides who are concerned with another kind of "law of nature."

tion to ethics. "Tendency" is the ontological ground of ethics, that is to say, right action is action in accordance with natural tendencies. Value is grounded in the facts of existence which only empirical inquiry will disclose. The Aristotelian and Thomist heritage which is expressed in these formulations is evident and readily acknowledged. But this is not the place to explore the problem it presents. Let it be noted in passing that this "realistic" interpretation appears much more dubious when applied to Plato, though Wild made a valiant effort to re-appraise Plato in such terms in his Plato's Theory of Man—An Introduction to the Realistic Philosophy of

Culture (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1946).

Wild, in any case, stresses five basic doctrines which are essentially doctrines regarding nature (physis) as characteristic of such a realistic view of natural law: (1) the world is an order of divergent tendencies which on the whole support one another; (2) each recurrent tendency is determined by a specific structure or form; (3) this structure determines certain basic existential tendencies that are also common to the species; (4) such tendencies must be activated according to a certain normal pattern of law; (5) good and evil are existential categories; it is good for an entity to exist in a condition of active realization (pp. 132-33 and 134 are combined here; Wild gives still other versions on pp. 138, 158 and elsewhere; the divergencies in these "definitions" are a bit puzzling). These doctrines are considered as five related meanings of the term "nature" which they embody. They have three ethical corollaries, namely (1) moral or natural laws are universal; (2) norms founded on nature exist; (3) the realization of human nature is the ultimate good for men (p. 134). These corollaries, as well as the ontological propositions upon which they rest, this "realistic" view of nature and of the law of nature, have, Wild believes, been characteristic of natural law teaching throughout the ages; Wild more specifically argues that they are contained in the Stoic doctrines, in Thomas Aquinas, in Hooker, Grotius and Thomas Paine. But he roundly asserts that "the early thinkers of the Reformation were led to ignore it, or even to deny it, by their anti-intellectualism . . ." (p. 175) an untenable view not only for Luther who fully accepted medieval natural law doctrine, but more especially for Melanchthon who developed the Thomist position to fit it into Protestant thought, thus paving the way for Hooker as the latter was only too ready to acknowledge.7

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^{7.} See for all this my *Inevitable Peace* (1949), Ch. IV, where this problem is more fully discussed. Generally speaking, the history of natural law is more complex than Wild seems to recognize; there is no indication that he is familiar with the literature in the field, e.g., A. P. d'Entreves' admirable *Natural Law*—see below.

We agree with him in general, though, that the strand he identifies as "realist" is the dominant one and that Hobbes and Locke are "deviations." Strauss who calls theirs the "modern natural right" doctrine is essentially saying the same thing; neither faces the problems presented by such thinkers as Pufendorf who combine Grotius' and Hobbes' doctrine into a pattern which becomes dominant in the eighteenth century. There is a corresponding misinterpretation in Wild of Kant's views on natural law. which flows from his general notions concerning Kant as "subjectivist" and "dualist,"—familiar and all-too-common notions, alas. An examination of Kant's Critique of the Power of Judgment and of his Theory of Law (Rechtslehre) will show him to be in substantial agreement with Aristotle and the other expounders of natural law as characterized by Wild; whether this is "realist" is another question. The extraordinary, stimulating, and in some ways strained interpretation of Plato which identifies the Platonic ideas with nature could, ceteris paribus, be applied to Kant as well. The same holds true of the three ethical corollaries of the ontological propositions. For what but these is the "moral law within" that seemed to Kant to be as much cause for "Wonder" as the "starred heaven above"? Yet according to Wild, this would make Kant a "moral realist." In advancing this criticism. I wish to emphasize my basic accord with Wild, rather than underline our differences, since I consider his erroneous interpretation of Kant as rather incidental. But in what did Hobbes, Kant's main butt in the field of moral philosophy, and Locke who according to both Wild and Strauss is his somewhat qualified follower, diverge from this great tradition of natural law? Wild does not examine Hobbes with reference to his three ethical theses, but with regard to the five ontological principles, rightly finding him wanting in regard to all of them. Natural chaos, and not natural order, at least in the state of nature, is the condition of man. The individual is not marked by an essential nature determining necessary tendencies; blind efficient force is the only cause he recognizes. This last proposition is true enough, but Hobbes nevertheless very definitely expounded a view of man which involved an essential nature determining necessary tendencies. This nature is epitomized by the desire for peace and the fear of violent death from which he derives his rules of prudent conduct (which he calls "laws of nature"). Wild also erroneously maintains that Hobbes does not recognize "natural" sanctions for any violations of these "laws." The opposite is the true Hobbesian doctrine; indeed, he asks that the members of the commonwealth depend upon such natural sanctions for punishing the "unjust sovereign." The real issue is not the

absence of such sanctions, but their interpretation. In keeping with Hobbes' hedonistic and materialist doctrine, they are seen in terms of pleasure and pain, rather than in terms of a failure of human self-fulfillment, characteristic of the spiritual tradition of natural law. This point is

well made by Wild himself in relation to his fifth theorem.

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Strauss, who is known for his penetrating monograph on Hobbes, 8 does not, of course, commit similar errors. This is in part due to his interpreting Plato and his followers not as realists, but as idealists, for it was against this presumed idealism that Hobbes' argument was directed. The one fundamental mistake of traditional political (natural law) philosophy was, according to Hobbes, that of assuming that man is by nature a political or social animal. Strauss states that by rejecting this assumption, Hobbes joins the Epicurean tradition (p. 169). But from the apolitical view that man is not a social animal, he turns to a political purpose. By instilling the spirit of political idealism into the Epicurean tradition, he became the founder of "political hedonism." Strauss feels that this doctrine of political hedonism has revolutionized human life in an unprecedented fashion. To buttress his interpretation, he turns to Hobbes' philosophy of nature; it is of the type classically represented by Democritean physics. But Hobbes learned from Plato whom he considered the best of the ancient philosophers that mathematics is the mother of all natural science. Hobbes' natural philosophy is both mathematical and materialist-mechanistic. By synthesizing political idealism with this view of nature, Hobbes was inevitably led to the notion of a dogmatic philosophy based on extreme skepticism. Certain or scientific knowledge of things is possible only when we have ourselves made them, constructed them, caused them, -indeed it must be "conscious construction." Only such construction puts them "into our power."

Strauss notes that "power" is the key term in Hobbes' philosophy, that in this concept Hobbes condensed the quintessence of his thought. And since power is centrally a political term, political thought moves into the center of philosophy. Yet it was only in Hobbes' work that power becomes "for the first time eo nomine a central theme" of political philosophy. But beyond politics, Hobbes' whole philosophy is one of "power." We have criticized Strauss himself for injecting this emphasis on power into Plato and Aristotle by making the paramount social phenomenon in their philosophy the "actual distribution of power," that is, the "regime." If

^{8.} The Political Philosophy of Thomas Hobbes—Its Basis and Its Genesis (Oxford, Clarendon, 1936).

Strauss were right, the difference between Hobbes and the classics would be much less pronounced than it is.9 Strauss summarizes and extends his well-known critique of the Hobbesian position, of which he writes, paradoxically, that in both his theoretical and his practical philosophy, Hobbes "teaches that reason is impotent and that it is omnipotent, or that reason is omnipotent, because it is impotent." Subtly, and rightly, Strauss argues that "reason has no cosmic support" in Hobbes' view. Yet precisely that fact frees it to "construct" its universe, and thus to accomplish the "conquest" of nature. Likewise, reason is impotent against passion, but it can become omnipotent, if it harnesses that passion. And this basis of political power is not a free construct. For "we understand not merely what we make but also what makes our makings" (p. 201). The knowledge of the nature of man is hence, in Hobbes' view, not hypothetical, as is all natural knowledge, but true insight: dogmatic. Any ultimate critique of Hobbes must, as a consequence, turn upon whether his insight is true; but with the existential unsoundness and the inherent contradictions of Hobbes' position regarding man Strauss does not further concern himself. Perhaps he considers them too obvious.

Locke is seen, by Strauss as by Wild, as essentially a Hobbesian, though more cautious and circumspect and ever alert to cite the more generally approved authorities, like the "judicious" Hooker. ¹⁰ If classic natural law is accepted as a norm, we are forced to conclude that "Locke cannot have recognized any law of nature in the proper sense of the term" (p. 220). This is sharply at variance with the accepted interpretation, but Strauss feels that it resolves many of the contradictions, illogical flaws and inconsistencies with which Locke is usually charged and which could not have escaped the notice of so acute a mind. The *Treatises on Government* are essentially political propaganda, not a philosophical argument; and they are based upon the Hobbesian "lead." Hence Locke's deviation from Hooker is profound. This is especially manifest in the doctrine of a "state of nature" which is at variance with the tradition of natural law (as it is with that of the Bible). Human beings are needed to apply the sanctions

^{9.} For the importance of this concept of power in interpreting the age of the Baroque, see my The Age of the Baroque—1610-1660 (1952). Here also the elucidation of the power-impotence paradox.

^{10.} Strauss offers an amusing excursus on "caution" as "noble fear." Quoting Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity in a number of passages, he is able to show that Locke thought even Jesus to have practiced such "caution" as "to keep himself out of the reach of any accusation." Cautious speech is legitimate, in Locke's view, "if unqualified frankness would hinder a noble work . . . or expose one to persecution or endanger the public peace," he writes (p. 209).

which are required for the enforcement of such laws of nature as prevail in the state of nature; for they are not "implanted in man" or "writ in the hearts of mankind" or "imprinted or stamped upon our minds." Only the basic right of nature, that of self-preservation, is always and universally observed. It is "the strongest desire God planted in men, and wrought into the very principles of their nature" (p. 227). Reason is the faculty of discovering the means for implementing this basic right; reason therefore wills peace. So far, so good. But when Strauss finally recognizes that Locke sharply deviates from Hobbes in showing that this principle of self-preservation requires limited, constitutional government, he at once introduces the really vital issue. For how can such a limitation be made to work if the Hobbesian conception of man and the consequent principle of

sovereignty are accepted?

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The image of manywhich Locke operates is sharply at variance with that of Hobbes; man is no longer that apolitical, asocial being which Strauss rightly had stressed as the basis of Hobbes' peculiar construction, but a sociable being enjoying community with other men. Consequently, once the vital issue of Locke's "image of man" is taken account of, "the divergence between him and Hobbes becomes very striking. This is elaborated by Strauss himself in his comments on property which he, with other modern commentators, would place in the center of Locke's political teaching (pp. 234 ff.). Following McPherson, Larkin, and others, he points out that this right is a derivative one, related to the common good. 'Acquisitiveness is not merely compatible with general plenty, but the cause of it." And labor is consequently important as a source of wealth. "The public good of the people is identical with plenty," peace and safety are indispensable conditions of this plenty. Hence the end of civil society is the preservation of property. All this is true enough; but Strauss, like some others, neglects to mention the very broad definition of property which Locke gives. Even so, we can agree with Strauss that Locke's teaching on property, and therewith his whole political philosophy, are revolutionary. That "hopeful self-reliance and creativity become henceforth the marks of human nobility" (p. 248) is also very true. Even if the metaphysical basis of such a view is weak, it would seem preferable to Plato's conservative "obeying and imitating nature." Locke certainly is a hedonist;

^{11.} Strauss himself, in an admirable passage, stresses that "every society regards a specific human type as authoritative" (p. 137), and he further recognized that this type may be the common man. "In order to be truly authoritative, the human beings who embody the admired habits or attitudes must have the decisive say within the community . . ." (bid.).

pleasure and pain are his yardsticks; but surely this is no news to any student of political thought or philosophy. If "all knowledge depends on labor and is labor," as Strauss rightly claims for Locke, then labor indeed takes the place of the art which imitates nature and becomes it master; for labor does not accept but modifies nature; it is, "in the words of Hegel, a negative attitude" (p. 250). This is the strongest root of the equalitarianism which distinguishes modern natural right, in Hobbes, in Locke and beyond. Should we argue with them on that account? No. We object to it in Hobbes, because his image of man foreshadows the mass man of contemporary totalitarianism; we approve of it in Locke, because his image of man provides the starting point for the common man—citizen of con-

temporary constitutional democracies.

But what of the issue of historicism which seemed the original focal point of Strauss' approach to natural right? What Strauss has to say on "Natural Right and the Historical Approach" and on "Natural Right and the Distinction between Facts and Values" seems to us largely very sound. He defines historicism in broad terms. Thus he writes: "according to our contemporaries all philosophizing essentially belongs to a 'historical world, 'culture,' 'civilization,' 'Weltanschauung,' that is, to what Plato called the cave. We shall call this view 'historicism.' "12 As such it is a species of relativism; but historicism ought not to be confused with skepticism. For it radically and rather uncritically asserts that the source of all true knowledge is "the experience of history." Strauss does not enter upon a detailed analysis of this curious concept, with its intuitional overtones. It might have been more illuminating than his attempt to make central the belief in an "absolute moment in history." I do not agree with Strauss' aside about Hegel in this connection, but what "Hegel meant" is and probably will always remain a moot point, especially what he meant by the absolute truth as he expounded it. More especially I question whether Hegel "assumed that his own time was the end of history and hence the absolute moment." There are several very important passages which show him conscious of a future which he as a philosopher cannot analyze, because he cannot predict the workings of the world spirit. For after all Hegel was a philosopher, not a historian, and his emphatic insistence upon this fact is of vital importance. But this does not really affect what Strauss has to say on historicism and its limitations. His

^{12.} P. 12. By including Weltanschauung in this list, Strauss overshot the mark, for such a Weltanschauung is a philosophy, and therefore that part of the statement is merely a harmless tautology, whereas it might have been well to include "race" and "class" as other vital aspects of historicism which have had unfortunate practical consequences in our time.

characterization of "radical historicism" (p. 26 f.) is masterful in its subtlety, but defies brief summation; historicism is relativist in insisting that all thought, including its own, is historically conditioned. It rests upon the claim that "history—history divorced from all dubious or metaphys-

ical assumptions—became the highest authority."

The two philosophers whom Strauss considers decisive in precipitating the "crisis of modern natural right" are Rousseau and Burke. He deviates from recent Rousseau scholarship which has tended to stress the rational in Rousseau (Derathe) and stresses rather Rousseau's concern with passion and freedom. Yet Rousseau was "a somewhat unwilling witness" to the superiority of the rational tradition in natural law teaching (as contrasted with Hobbes and Locke). Still, Rousseau, according to Strauss, "refused to admit that man is by nature a social being." He supports this questionable proposition by the highly confusing statement that the root of society is found in human passions "as distinguished from the fundamental sociability of man." Surely, this is a distinction without a difference! Strauss' analysis culminates in a similar distinction: "The ultimate of this attempt (of Rousseau) was the substitution of freedom for virtue or the view that it is not virtue which makes man free but freedom which makes man virtuous." Surely this is a misreading of Rousseau's doctrine which in fact makes freedom an essential condition of virtue, -a view which he shares with a large number of philosophers throughout the ages and from whom he is in no sense distinctive. We cannot here consider the remainder of Strauss' analysis of Rousseau; it is vitiated by the basic error we have noted. Nor can we do justice to his treatment of Burke. Suffice it to observe that on the whole his analysis stays within the bounds of the familiar notions about Burke's relations to Hegel as well as to the historical school. Strauss does not elucidate how both can be true, considering the basic ontological conflict between Hegel and the historical school. But he does recognize that Burke did not in fact accept the position of what later became historicism. "Burke was still too deeply imbued with the spirit of 'sound antiquity' to allow the concern with individuality to overpower the concern with virtue" (p. 323). True enough. But then, why close a discussion of natural right and history with a discussion of Burke? Genuine historicism denies the significance of universal norms, 13 "the historical school destroyed the only solid basis of all efforts to transcend the actual." "Historicism thrives on the fact that it inconsistently exempts itself from its

^{13.} Hegel did not; and recent careful work by men like Stoll and Zwiglmeyer has shown that it is not true of Savigny, either.

own verdict about all human thought." "The historicist thesis is self-contradictory or absurd." Hence, historicism ends in nihilism.

I must confess at feeling slightly ill at ease with this verdict because of the term "nihilism," which is rapidly becoming the most fashionable term of philosophical abuse. Originally employed by Dostoyevsky to characterize certain revolutionary fanatics, and by Nietzsche for related purposes, it is now considered suitable to characterize whatever one does not like or disagrees with radically. One can go a long way in working with "historical" materials without necessarily becoming an "historicist," let alone a nihilist. The careful "historical" elucidation of what men in the past have actually thought and said (a task to which Strauss himself is so genuinely devoted) does not exclude the maintenance of an interest in the standard of truth as an ultimate yardstick in metaphysical, ontological terms. It seems that we are at the present time beset with "historical" judgments on the part of dogmatists who assert that various positions sharply antagonistic in their conception are "identical," because they happen to have some single judgment or two in common. From here it is an easy step to the proposition that because there exists the particular identity, one thinker "leads" to the other. Thus Hegel and Hobbes and Machiavelli and Saint Augustine and the Gnostics and Plato and Aristotle and eventually anything you please is shown to "lead" to totalitarianism, and hence proven to be bad, q.e.d. The errors of all these thinkers are great and patent to some or to most of us, but I admit to a certain longing for the day when the witches' sabbath of such identifications yields to a saner, more philosophical (and more historical) assessment of past thought. For even if one agrees to a large extent with an author about his basic position, and I think I do to some extent at least with both Strauss and Wild, I would like to think that the basic "wonder" which is the alpha and omega of all philosophy might lead to a greater interest in what thinkers in the past were right about than in what they failed to do. Hegel, surely a dogmatist if ever there was one, once put it nicely in his notes: "When a man has finally reached the point where he does not think he knows it better than others, that is when he has become indifferent to what they have done badly and he is interested only in what they have done right, then peace and affirmation have come to him." There is not enough of this peace and affirmation in these treatments of natural law and right. Could it be that neither author has ever climbed down far enough into the cave of existential reality to struggle with the problems of injustice in the concrete context of law and politics as history shows it to the diligent observer?

BOOK REVIEWS

André Piganiol

ROME AND ASIA

Aus Spätantike und Christentum

BY FRANZ ALTHEIM

(Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1951.) Pp. 169.

Asien und Röm, neue Urkunden aus Sasanidischer Frühzeit

BY FRANZ ALTHEIM AND RUTH STIEHL

(Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1952.) Pp. 87.

Attila und die Hunnen

BY FRANZ ALTHEIM

(Baden-Baden: Verlag für Kunst und Wissenschaft, 1951.) Pp. 215, 16 pl., 1 map.

The works of F. Altheim cover a very large period of time, from the Indo-European migrations until the Avar and Arab invasions. Although he is interested in studying the classical period of Rome, it is obvious that Altheim is pre-

occupied with the problem of migrations. This problem, however, can only be examined within the framework of Eurasia, and this is why he attempts to tear down the traditional divisions of ancient history. He readily reiterates that, toward the beginning of our era, three great empires existed in Eurasia: Rome, Persia and China. Nomadic peoples wandered throughout these empires and played the role of mediators between these various civilizations. According to this view, the barbarians assumed a position similar to that of the classical peoples.

The Roman Empire erected a firm barrier against migrations, whether from the north or from the east: this is what is meant by the "Roman peace." But this truce was a precarious one. In spite of a desperate defensive struggle, Europe was once more submerged. The Eastern Empire alone knew the glory of preserving for another thousand years the achievements of Rome. The three works that we review here are devoted precisely to the critical period from the third to the fifth century. We find at times, expressed in the same terms, pages that the author had published previously. Typical of this ebullient study are the repetitions and digressions which occur frequently.

In the very beginning of the book entitled Aus Spätantike und Christentum, we encounter research on the oriental origins of the solar theology that so greatly influenced paganism and perhaps even the Christianity of the decadent Empire. In 1913, F. Cumont wrote a study on this fine subject that has remained a classic. In it he showed that heliolatry had evolved along with scientific and philosophical progress. The sun was first considered the lord of nature, man's creator and his savior, until the supreme God supplanted it and

it was there reduced to the rank of a demiurge. According to Cumont, the role of the Semites in the elaboration of this theology had been a decisive one; we have not forgotten his striking conclusion "The same Semitic race that caused the fall of Paganism is also the race that made the most strenuous efforts to save it."

Altheim's theories develop within the same framework. In the beginning there is a critical investigation of the sources. Macrobius, in Book I of Saturnalia, places in the mouth of Bettius Praetextatus, "the pope of paganism," a dissertation destined to prove that the sun is the supreme God and that most of the great gods-Liber, Mars, Mercury, Attis-are simply other names for the sun or for solar virtues. Wissova had suspected that Macrobius' source was a neo-Platonist of the fourth century. Actually, according to Altheim, this source is Greek: it is Porphyry's book on the sun. One could object that, in the passages of Porphyry that Eusebius preserved for us, it is not the sun which is the supreme God, but thought, identical with Jupiter. In a letter to Anebon, Porphyry identifies the sun with a demiurge. But these objections are not decisive ones. Porphyry is not very original, and he might have followed various sources in several different works. P. Courcelle, whose name deserved to have been cited, gave evidence of the extraordinary vogue which the writings of Porphyry enjoyed in pagan circles of the fourth century. Macrobius, who surely came from a Greek family, could read his writings in the original text. Finally, one observes in Praxiteles' speeches the minute

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^{1.} Mémoires de l'Académie dus à divers savants, XII, 2, 1948.

description and the symbolic interpretation of divine statues. However, Porphyry's treatise on *The Sun* is contemporaneous with another book by the same author on *The Divine Images*.

The Temple of the Sun in the Field of Mars-whose anniversary falls on December 25-was founded by Aurelius following the vision he had of the Sun of Emesa which, during the course of the war against Zenobia, earned him a victory over the Sun of Palmyra. Altheim takes this occasion to develop an interesting study of the pressure which the Arabs exerted upon the Roman Empire of the third century. He quotes from J. Carcopine's researches on "the boundary of Numidia and its Syrian guard"; he recalls the conquest of Egypt by the Palmyrians; he attributes to an Arab prince of the third century the creation of the enigmatic palace of Mschatta. One can readily see how this digression on the role of the Semites tallies with Cumont's remark which we cited earlier.

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Finally, Altheim proposes to demonstrate that it was the cult of the sun, and not Christianity, that marked the decisive moment in religious evolution. Therefore he analyzes with care the crisis of 312, which, he says, paved the way for the religious policies of Constantine's father, Constantius Chlorus, who was probably a sun-worshipper. It is regrettable that Altheim did not avail himself of H. Stern's study which appears in his edition of the Calendar of 354 and concludes thus: "Constantius Chlorus was the first to make use, in his monetary issues, of the nimbus, doubtless the solar symbol of that time." Altheim studies other monuments of the same period which he believes offer evidence of the sun's eminent position—the Arch of Constantine in Rome and the patera in Parabiago. But above all he compares the emblem that Constantine had had engraved upon his soldiers' shields the day before the battle of Pons Milvius with the solar symbol that Aurelius ordered placed upon all shields the day after his vision of Emesa.

We have analyzed Altheim's study in detail because we wanted to point up the persuasiveness of his method and its dangers. His arguments are uneven in quality and some of them do not stand up on examination. He observes that the translation of the Latin word indiges by the Greek word genarches "cannot be prior to the time when the god of Emesa was introduced into Rome" (p. 44, n. I.). But this translation was already to be found in Diodorus of Sicily.

He calls our attention to the two images of the sun and moon which can be seen on the sides of the Arch of Constantine; the presence of these celestial bodies, the forces of the cosmos, supposedly prove the triumph of a cult that was neo-Platonic in form. Yet I can contribute an observation that does not seem to have been made: on the surface of the Arch of Orange that overlooks the city, an Attic relief on the right portrays the bust of a veiled woman which probably represents the moon; the relief on the other side has

^{2. &}quot;Le Calendrier de 354," Bibliothèque arch, et hist, de l'Institut français de Beyrouth, LV, 1953, 148.

disappeared but it is permissible to surmise that it portrayed the sun If this is so, the symbolism of the Arch of Constantine originated prior to neo-Platonism and to the Syrian influences, for the inscription on the arch bears the date of the year 26 A.D.

On the patera at Parabiago—and we must accept the date as being some time in the fourth century, which A. Alföldi claims is correct—does the sun really occupy the place of honor as Altheim maintains? Not at all; the rather small images of the sun and the moon at the very top merely constitute necessary accessories to the composition.

Does the transfer of Syrian troops to the boundaries of Maghreb offer proof of Semitic penetration in the third century? Since J. Carcopine's study of this problem we have been surprised to discover that Syrian troops were in Maghreb as early as the first half of the second century; in Gemallae, in the extreme south of Algeria, as early as 126, and in El Kantara in 169.³

And now I come to the most serious problem, that of the origin of the Constantinian emblem, the Chrismon. We are aware of the extraordinary abundance of research to which it gave rise, particularly since H. Grégoire expressed the view that the supposed Christian emblem was actually a Celtic symbol seen by Constantine on the Temple of Apollo in Gaul. Personally, I subscribe to this brilliant hypothesis which Altheim expressly condemns, and yet which seems to be in accordance with his own views. The two most recent studies on the subject maintain

3. J. Baradez, Fossatum Africae (Algiers, 1949), p. 103; L. Leschi, Libyca, II, 1954, 179.

that Constantine had the firm intention of placing a Christian emblem on the shields. What, precisely, is Altheim's opinion? It is not easy to determine. He merely affirms that the cross of 312 is like Aurelius' sun-drop.

But, setting aside these details, we have said that, in essence, Altheim's thesis agrees with Cumont's. However. it would have been worth his while to note that this thesis was challenged by M. P. Nilsson who contrasts the antiquity of the solar cult in Egypt, on the one hand, with the tardy appearance of the solar calendar in Syria, on the other.5 Above all, one must take into account the originality of Greek philosophical speculation in regard to the solar cult as well as in regard to the cult of mysteries, as P. Lambrechts has demonstrated. "One must not look to the Orient," M. J. Noiville writes, "if one wishes to understand Aurelius's policies and his success."6 And so Altheim's thesis, presented with such brilliance, is nonetheless questionable in many of its details, and his general concept, which I believe to be accurate, should have been substantiated against those claims that recently have shaken Cumont's thesis.

The second work, by Franz Altheim and Ruth Stiehl, Asien und Röm, also begins with a critical study of the texts. This time the authors are concerned

^{4.} A. Alföldi, "Das Kreuzszepter Konstantins des Grossen," Gazette numismatique suisse, IV, 1954, 81. C. Cecchelli, Il trionfo della croce (Rome, 1954).

^{5. &}quot;Sonnankalender und Sonnenreligion," Archiv für Religionswiss, XXX, 1953, 141.

^{6.} Revue des Etudes anciennes, 1935, 135.

with two Persian parchments from Doura which C. Bradford Welles entrusted to them. The first parchment, which mentions Emperor Quietus and apparently alludes to his fall, is dated in the fortieth year of King Sapor's reign. Now a controversy has recently arisen over the date of Sapor's advent-240 according to W. Ensslin, March, 242 according to Maricq. Since the fall of Quietus occurred in 261, one must presume that, according to the Sassanian computation, the first year of Sapor's reign began on September 22, 241, and that Ouietus fell a little prior to September 22, 261. The chronological uncertainty about events in the third century is such that the acquisition of this new manuscript will be most welcome.

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The second parchment gives the authors the opportunity to study once again the inscriptions on the synagogue at Doura, on which the artists engraved the dates of their works. One of these inscriptions is dated the eighteenth year of Sapor's reign, and it proves that the city did not fall in 256 or 257, as was generally believed, but in 260 at the very earliest. The artists who adorned the synagogue dared, on the eve of disaster, to use the chronology of the Persian kings because they were traitors, a fifth column, who were paving the way for foreign occupation.

This impressive thesis does not carry conviction. The erection of the synagogue dates from 245; would they have waited during the critical years that began in 254 to decorate it? The res gestae divi Saporis, that beautiful inscription in which King Sapor enumerates his victories, seems to confirm that 256 was the date of the conquest of Doura. If the

inscriptions were dated according to the local era of Doura, which starts in 232, the year eighteen would take us to 250, and then we would have no reason to doubt. It is true that the painting indicates this eighteenth year as the year of pestilence; but pestilence could well have ravaged Doura before the year 260, which has remained a famous one in history. If one prefers the date of 250 to that of 258, a very daring structure collapses.

Before taking up Altheim's work on the Huns, let us stop to examine a chapter of his book, Aus Spätantike und Christentum. In it the author studies an inscription found in Hungary, west of the middle basin of the Theiss, near tombs whose material dates from the third century. By its alphabet it recalls the north-Italic inscription and, by its language, it would belong to the Oriental Ossetic group, that is to say, the Alani. Thus this tiny text allows us to conjecture that the country once occupied by the Sarmatian Jazyges had been overrun, as early as the third century, by the Alani. In it Altheim finds a confirmation of his much-discussed thesis, according to which Emperor Maximus was born in Thrace at the end of the second century, of an Alani mother, in conformity with the suspect testimony in Histoire Auguste. The Alani, who, the ancients said, were of Caucasian origin, are the vanguard of the peoples of the steppes. Therefore, it is very important to assemble the slightest indications of their progress. Hadrian had an Alani horse, Borysthena, whose grave we are rather surprised to find in Apt. Moreover, Hadrian is the first emperor who intro-

duced formations of mounted archers into the Roman army. E. Salin, in 1951, published a description of a burial stock which he discovered at La Bussière-Etable, near Châteauponsac in the Limousin.7 One can recognize the armor of a warrior, perhaps a Roxolani, which testifies to the influence of Pontic art. Now, according to the author, this tomb dates from the second century. Altheim did not know this fine study: but he would doubtless have done well to discuss the communication that Alföldi sent to the Archeological Congress that met in Berlin in August, 1939.8 In it Alföldi explained that, in the days of Marcus Aurelius, a commercial route through Dacia united the Sarmatians of Hungary with the Roxolani, or red-haired Alani of Wallachia; there was no question of any Alani being in Hungary at that date. Therefore it would seem to us that to speak of the Alani as overrunning Hungary as early as the second century is premature.

On the heels of the Alani, a Persian people, came the Huns who were related to the Turks, as Paul Pelliot has testified. Altheim's work on the Huns is an answer to the rather alarmed curiosity of the contemporary world. The catastrophes that accompanied the fall of the Roman Empire, the movements of peoples which changed the face of Eurasia, remind one of the upheavals that we are witnessing today. The attention of scholars has been drawn to the crisis of the fifth century. Alföldi is working on a book about the

Huns in which he defines, at the outset, the archeological material. E. A. Thompson wrote A History of Attila and the Huns once criticized by Altheim as being too subservient to the sources; which could, of course, be considered high praise. E. Salin studied the Huns' tombs and remarked that their occupants' very bones are terrifying. ¹⁰ One finds the main themes of Altheim's new book in an article of his published as early as 1040. ¹¹

Thompson begins the history of the Huns in 357, the date when they crossed the Volga and destroyed the Gothic kingdom of Hermaneric. He believes we know nothing of an earlier period. On the other hand, more than one third of Altheim's book is devoted precisely to the period prior to 357. He maintains that both the identity of the Huns and that of the peoples of the steppes, the Hsiung-Nu, whose monuments are known to us thanks to the Chinese annals, is certain. For a long time there has been controversy over the legitimacy of this identification.12 A recent study by Maenchen-Helfen denies its legitimacy.13 However, the publication of five Sogdianian letters by Sir Aurel Stein contributes a new fact: the Sogdianians call the nomads of the steppes

^{7.} Monuments Piot, XLV, 1951, 89.

^{8.} Bericht über den VI internat. Kongress für Archäologie, Berlin, 1939, 523.

 [&]quot;Funde der Hunnenzeit und ihre ethnische Sonderung," Archeologia Ungarica, 1932.

^{10.} A History of Attila and the Huns, Oxford, 1948; reviewed by F. Altheim, Gnomon, 1949, 253.

La Civilisation mérovingienne, I, 259, Paris, 1950.

^{12. &}quot;Die Wanderung der Hunnen," Nouvelle Clio, I, 1949, 71.

^{13. &}quot;Huns and Hsiung-Nu," Byzantion, XVII, 1944-45, 222.

xwn, a word which we can recognize as denoting Hun. Marie Bussagli believes that this argument¹⁴ proves the identity of the Hsiung-Nu and the Huns. This theory, which has been frequently advanced, is regarded as valid by René Grousset, for example. And so, in order to understand the origins of the Hunnic civilization, it is necessary to seek information from the archeological documents of Asia; the bronzes of the Ordos desert, which would represent the incunabula and their civilization; the burial stock of Noin-Ula, discovered by the Kozlov expedition in the Keroulen steppes; the objects that were traded at the time of the Roman Empire in the great market-places of Lou-Lan, near Lob Nor; the discoveries that were the result of S. P. Tolstov's expedition among the Chwarezmians of the Oxus. And in Altheim's book we also find curious objects-bronzes from Ordos, tapestry from Noin-Ula, relics from China or Hungary. But these are hardly more than the backdrop that creates the atmosphere. However, we believe that Altheim was correct in thinking that the civilization of the Huns developed in the early centuries and that they were in contact with China, Persia and Iberia at one time or

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If, however, one persisted in believing that the identity of the Huns and the Hsiung-Nu is doubtful, what would remain? One would have to consider seriously Ptolemy's text which places the *Chounoi* between the Don and the Volga, and one would also be obliged

to refer to Philostorgius' text, which indicates that Mont Riphées—that is to say, apparently, the region of the Urals—is their country. One could perhaps recall, if he wished to lend credence to this theory, the influence that the mix-Hellène of the Pontic region exerted upon the Huns. In order to decide, it would be necessary to explore archeological data more methodically.

From 170 on, the Chinese annals themselves are mute. Altheim, conjecturing, explains the Huns' migrations by the pressure that apparently had been exerted at that time upon the Yue-Tchi, the Sacae and the Sarmatians; even the Mediterranean civilization seems to have felt the repercussions of this pressure. We find here a remarkable theory that Altheim presented as early as 1936; he emphasized the significance of the events of the year 168 B.C. (das Epochenjahr), when the great invasions were already beginning.

The analysis of Hunnic civilization which this book gives us is of great interest. The Huns are, the author says, semi-nomadic; they are engaged in a certain form of agriculture and belong to a social structure of the Pacific type. Besides the dangerous power of their cavalry of mounted archers, which was their essential strength, they also supposedly possessed heavy cavalry—a hypothesis that no document seems to substantiate. At the time of the invasions the Huns had a feudal structure, scholars have observed, and a bureaucracy developed in its midst. Unfortunately, too many features of this brilliant picture

^{14. &}quot;Osservazioni sul problema degli Unni," Rendiconti dell'Accad. dei Lencei, V, 1950, 212.

^{15.} F. Altheim and A. Szabo, "Eine Vorläuferin der grossen Völkerwanderung," Welt als Geschichte, II, 1936, 315.

are speculative, due to the lack of source material. Thompson had already noted that sheep are never mentioned although they must have been one of the nomads' principal possessions.

Altheim refuses to delve into the political events that are part of the history of the Huns from 357 on. He is mainly interested in their relations with the Germans. During the course of the last war he had already devoted a careful study to the history of the kingdoms created by the Goths in the Ukraine and to the Goths' extensive relations with the people of Finland and of the Urals. The hatred that existed between the Goths and the Huns was a decisive factor in the conflict of forces of the fifth century. It was the Goths who created the portrait of the tyrant, Attila. When the Huns invaded Gaul, what was to be the attitude of the Germans in this great duel between the Occident and the Orient? Altheim had already emphasized, in an earlier book, the tragic meaning of this choice. "The problem of destiny that the Germans faced at that time has lost nothing of its pressing nature." There is no doubt that the Huns would have been victorious if the Visigoths had refused to join forces with Rome.

And so, in the second half of his book, Altheim's tale runs parallel to Thompson's, but it moves more rapidly. It is surprising that he does not say a word about the first Hunnic invasion in 395, which was such an important one. He does full justice to Priscus' admirable account, which he considers one of the masterpieces of Hellenistic history, and he provides us with an excellent commentary on it. We know that at

times Priscus speaks of the Huns and at other times of the Scythians without explaining the significance of these terms. Thompson subscribes to Bury's opinion and believes that the word Scythian is a more general term in this context, and that the Huns are a species of Scythians. Altheim suggests a different interpretation which, however, he is not positive is the right one. In Priscus' thinking the term Hun might denote Herrenvolk and Scythian the mass of conquered peoples. Those that Priscus meets in Attila's immediate entourage and whom he calls "the first of the Scythians" would not be, therefore, the true Huns. Among these groups of conquered peoples are the Germans. The solution suggested by Altheim might resolve a difficult problem. Odoacer-who put an end to the Western Empire—is the son of Edeco, who is probably the person Priscus met as Attila's adviser. Reynolds and Lopez recently reached the conclusion that Odoacer must have been a member of the Hunnic, not of the German, race.16 But it is quite likely that Odoacer can be placed precisely in the category of supposed "Scythians" which the Germans constituted.

Altheim did not explore, as did Thompson, the cause of the very easy victories that Attila won in Gaul. The latter stresses the presence, in 450, of a Bagaudae doctor, Eudoxius, at Attila's side. Who are the Bagaudae? Proletarians, Gallic patriots, outlaws whom Rome treated as people without a country. Aëtius protected the interests of the

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^{16.} R. L. Reynolds and R. S. Lopez, "Odoacer German or Hun," American Historical Review, LII, 1946, 36.

landed aristocracy and opposed the Bagaudae. "On the banks of the Loire," Thompson writes, "many eyes turn with hope toward the east." Attila's victory can therefore be explained by a certain form of treachery. W. Ensslin condemns this interpretation¹⁷ which Altheim does not even mention.

Speaking generally, Thompson was more concerned with economic problems. It is important to note, of course, that in 435, the Huns were clamoring for the reestablishment of commercial privileges. The conflict of 444 began with scuffles in the market-place. Later, Attila demanded the transfer of all market-places from the Danube to the city of Naissus. Unfortunately, we do not know how the scale of these markets was established; Thompson surmises that the Huns spent gold which they received in the form of tribute. On the other hand, Altheim reproaches Thompson with entirely neglecting the religious factor. According to legend, Attila rediscovered the god of war's sword which the Scythian kings worshipped and from then on he believed in his divine power. "It was a fiendish, irrational force that pushed Attila ahead" (p. 130). "Like all those of his race, he believed himself inspired, led by higher powers, and perhaps he was." It is too bad that we know hardly anything about the Huns' religion.

Finally, we must note the beauty of the tale of Attila's death, which the author describes for us. He stresses the originality of the *lied* that was sung at his grave, of which Jordanes has given us the Latin version, "ein echtes hunnischer Dichtung." It is true that he can find nothing of its kind in the Turkish texts, but he believes that Gorgias has provided a comparable term, the bilingual of Mzscheta, which he studied, 18 and which he immediately concluded was influenced by Gorgias. This rather banal chant doubtless was not worth so much attention. The book does not end with Attila's death; it goes on to discuss the Avar and Turkish invasions, resituating them within the framework of Eurasia.

What has remained of the Huns' wanderings? What was the historic role of this people who disappeared like a meteor? Altheim attributes to them the creation of the proto-Bulgarian alphabet, which derived, through their offices, from the Aramean alphabet employed by the Sogdianians. We would not dare to follow him on this difficult terrain. Because of the terror they inspired, the Huns pushed the western Germans into an alliance with the Western Empire, and in this way gave the medieval period its historical form. Their essential achievement is, perhaps, that from the port of Sungaria to the Russian steppes, they opened up a new route through Eurasia.

The books we have just discussed illustrate clearly the method peculiar to their author. Altheim maintains that each era realizes an idea and has a style of its own. A small text—a chapter from Macrobius, a parchment from Doura, Attila's threnody—is found to be filled with deep significance. He would say,

^{18. &}quot;Die Bilinguis von Mzcheta," Mélanges Grégoires, I (Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire orientales et slaves), Brussels, 1949.

Book Reviews

for example, that the Huns gave form to the *Lebenstil* at the time of the invasions. Economic factors are outweighed in his opinion by mysticism. Although he is greatly interested in archeological relics, he does not care to confine himself to the patient methods of archeologists. His vision of the past is not always confirmed by the documents.

On the other hand, he has given new life to the ancient historians' palette. Thanks to his efforts, the personality of the barbarian appears in all its powerful diversity and originality: a classical temple or a book on Roman law interests him less than a palace in the Syrian

desert or a mural painting in an Oriental temple. And this is so because he does not feel that he is dealing with dead things; the ardent tone of his books shows that he incorporates the past with the present. To help us to understand what the armored barbarian soldiers were like he shows us a picture of Tibetan soldiers. He emphasizes the geographical uniformities that determine the form of life and that orient the migrations. This deep feeling for the immediacy of history enlivens all his books and makes the reading of them passionately interesting; even, at times, disquieting.

Notes on the Contributors

JACQUES RUEFF received his scientific training at the Ecole Polytechnique, in Paris. Since 1922, he has managed with remarkable success to reconcile a very significant career in governmental administration with his scientific and academic activities. He has held the post of professor at the Institut de Statistique de l'Université de Paris since 1022, and at the Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques since 1931, and has been president of the International Council of Philosophy and Humanistic Studies since its inception in 1949. He was elected a member of the Institut de France in December 1944. His principal publications are: From the Physical to the Social Sciences (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins, 1929); Sur une théorie de l'inflation (1925); Théorie des Phénomènes moné-

taires (1927); L'Ordre Social (1945); Epître aux dirigistes (1949); La régulation monétaire et le problème institutionnel de la monnaie (1953).

GILBERTO FREYRE, a native of Recife, in Pernambuco, the sugar cane land of which he writes, is an anthropologist and sociologist. He has been secretary of the government of Pernambuco, professor of sociology at the University of Pernambuco, and visiting professor at Stanford University. He organized the first Afro-Brazilian congress, has acted as technical advisor to his government in the fields of national monuments and geography, and is honorary professor of the School of Letters of Bahia, honorary member of the Institute of Sociology of Buenos Aires, and a federal deputy since

1947. Among his many published works are: Apologia pro generatione sua (1924); Centenario de Dom Pedro II (1925); Um Engenheiro francés no Brasil (1940); Brasil: an Interpretation (New York, Knopf, 1945); Sociologia (1945); The Masters and the Slaves (New York, Knopf, 1946).

RAYMOND ARON, a native Parisian, took his agrégé in philosophy in 1928 and his docteur ès lettres in 1938. He was appointed professor of the Faculté des Lettres of Toulouse in 1939, and, besides his activities as a political commentator, gives courses at the Institut d'Etudes politiques. His pre-war publications include: La Sociologie allemande contemporaine (Paris, Alcan, 1935); Essai sur la Théorie de l'Histoire dans l'Allemagne contemporaine (Paris, Vrin, 1938); Introduction à la Philosophie de l'Histoire (Paris, Gallimard, 1938). Since the war he has published: Le Grand Schisme (Paris, Gallimard, 1948); Les Guerres en chaine (Paris, Gallimard, 1951): L'Opium des Intellectuels (1953); The Century of Total War (Garden City, L. I., Doubleday, 1954).

CHARLES G. BELL was born in Greenville, Mississippi, and studied at the University of Virginia, and at Oxford, as a Rhodes scholar. Now assistant professor of humanities at the University of Chicago, he has taught at Princeton University, and as a visiting professor at Frankfurt. He has recently published a volume of poems called *Songs for America* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1953), and has contributed widely to magazines such as

Poetry, Harper's, the Atlantic Monthly, The Nation, and The New Yorker.

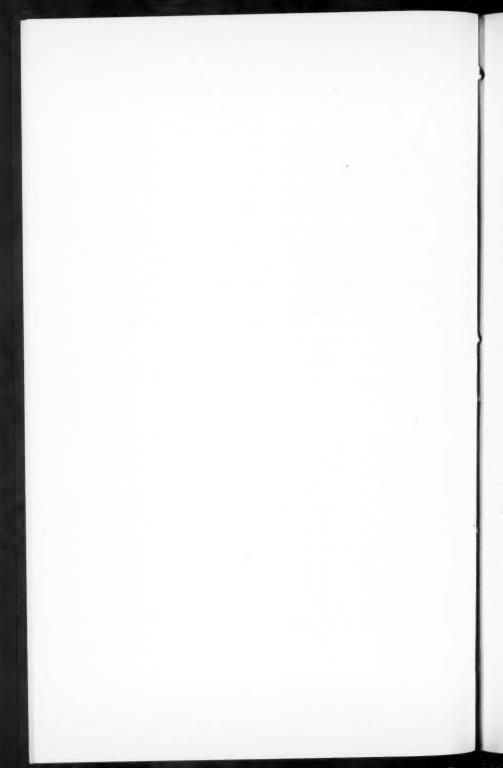
DR. DJÉMIL SALIBA is dean of the Faculty of Pedagogy of the University of Syria, professor of philosophy in the Faculty of Letters and member of the Arab Academy of Damascus. He is also a member of the Syrian National Commission for UNESCO and docteur ès lettres from the Sorbonne. Well versed in philosophy and Arabic studies, his books, numerous and varied, include his doctoral thesis: Etude sur la métaphysique d'Avicenne (Paris, 1927), and the following works in Arabic: Traité de Psychologie (Damascus, 1940); L'Epître finale des Frères de la Pureté (Damascus, Académie arabe, 1948); Traduction du Discours de la Méthode (Beyrouth, 1953); Méthodologie des Sciences (Damascus, 1947); De Platon à Avicenne (Damascus, 1951); La Roman philosophique d'Ibn Thofaîl (Damascus, 1942); Le préservatif de l'erreur de Gazali (Damascus, 1943).

VICTOR GACHKEL, born in St. Petersburg, Russia, came to Paris in 1924 and received the major part of his education there. He is Docteur en médecine de la Faculté de medécine de Paris. As practicing physician at the Hôpitaux psychiatriques, he fills the dual role of classical psychiatrist and psychoanalyst. He has published articles on general psychiatry and has become more and more concerned in recent years with psychosomatic problems. The work of the Pavlovian school has been of major interest to him and he has contributed considerably to the applications of its principles.

serge viderman, who writes on psychosomatics in collaboration with Dr. Gachkel, paralleled his medical studies with the study of philosophy, first at the Universities of Caen and Grenoble, then at the Sorbonne. A psychiatrist of the psychoanalytic school, he has published an Essai sur la Psychologie des Schizophrènes, as well as studies on the psychopathology of melancholy.

CARL JOACHIM FRIEDRICH, native of Leipzig, has been a naturalized citizen of the United States since 1928. He began his American teaching career as a lecturer at Harvard University in 1926–27 and became, in 1938, a permanent member of the faculty. His outside activities include: directorship of the

School for Overseas Administration. 1943-46, and advisor on governmental affairs, Office of Military Government, 1946-49. He has written widely in the fields of philosophy and political science, his published works including: New Image of the Common Man (Boston, Beacon, 1950); Introduction to Kant (New York, Modern Library, 1949); Inevitable Peace (1937); The Age of the Baroque (New York, Harper, 1952); The Philosophy of Hegel (1953); Public Policy Year Book of the Graduate School of Public Administrative Studies in Systematic Political Science (ed.) (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1940); American Experience in Military Government in World War II (New York, Rinehart, 1948).



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